NATION

3 Assam profs named in world's top 2% scientists

≫ Page: 4 ≪

BUSINESS

'Russia to stay India's No. 1 crude oil supplier'

≫ Page: 7 ≪

SPORTS

India, Pak captains refuse handshake at Women's WC

≫ Page: 8 ≪

www.twitter.com/EnglishSalar
www.facebook.com/EnglishSalar
www.instagram.com/dailysalarenglish
youtube.com/@dailysalardigital

SALAR

DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

ساڈھ روزنامہ بنگلور

Website: salarnews.in | www.magzter.com | 6 OCTOBER 2025 | MONDAY | BENGALURU | 13 RABI' II, 1447 AH | Vol 4 | Issue No 272 | Pages: 8

WORDS of WISDOM

"In the communities of ancient Christian tradition, such as those of the West, the presence of many brothers and sisters from the world's South should be welcomed as an opportunity, through an exchange that renews the face of the Church

POPE LEO urges the world's 1.4 BILLION Catholics to care for immigrants

ICMR approves Made-in-India TB tests

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

In a boost to India's fight against tuberculosis, apex health research body ICMR has validated new indigenously developed tools that could bolster the country's diagnostic capacity and offer a cheaper detection option. Eliminating tuberculosis (TB) depends crucially on the ability to detect early, accurately, and universally, to initiate patients on treatment and curb community transmission. Among the recently validated tools is Quantiplus MTB FAST detection kit, developed by Huwel Lifesciences in Telangana, the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) said in a note. Quantiplus is the first open system RT-PCR assay validated for the detection of lung TB as it can run on any existing PCR machine and is not limited to proprietary platforms.—*PTI*

>>>More on Page 4

Assam cops can't go to S'pore: CM on Zubeen probe

GUWAHATI, 4 OCT

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Saturday said that the state police cannot travel to Singapore to conduct the investigation into the mysterious death of cultural icon Zubeen Garg. Speaking to reporters after meeting Garg's family here, Sarma also said that Assam Police will not be able to "join the dots" if the Assamese people, who were present on the yacht at the time of Garg's death in the Southeast Asian nation, join the probe. "Our entire concern now is whether the people living in Singapore will come or not. If they do not come, we will not be able to complete the inquiry. They were the main people behind the yacht trip," he added.—*PTI*

>>>More on Page 4

Rescue operations underway and locals clear debris near their homes following landslides triggered by heavy rainfall in Darjeeling. Several houses were damaged as portions collapsed due to the impact ***PHOTO: PTI***

20 dead in Darjeeling amid heavy rains

Region gets 300 mm of rain in just 12 hours, leading to landslides ripping through the hills

DARJEELING, 5 OCT

At least 20 people, including several children, have died and dozens injured as relentless rains triggered massive landslides across the Mirik and Darjeeling hills on Sunday, sweeping away homes, severing roads, and stranding hundreds of tourists, officials said.

Fatalities were reported from Sarsaly, Jasbirgaon, Mirik Basti, Dhar Gaon (Mechi), Nagrakata, and the Mirik Lake area, according to the NDRF and district authorities. The worst-hit was Mirik, where 11 deaths were confirmed and seven injured rescued. Darjeeling reported seven deaths, with rescue efforts ongoing.

Describing the situation as "alarming", North Bengal Development Minister Udayan Guha said the toll could rise. Rescue operations, hampered by continuous rain and treacherous terrain, are being led by police, the NDRF, and local teams.

11 DEATHS The worst-hit was Mirik, where 11 deaths were confirmed and seven injured rescued. Darjeeling reported seven deaths, with rescue efforts ongoing.

Hundreds of tourists who had arrived for Durga Pooja festivities remain stranded in areas like Mirik, Ghoom, and Lepchajagat. Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, terming the situation "grave", said she would visit North Bengal on 6 October to assess the damage. She confirmed government compensation and employment for the families of victims. "More than 300 mm of rain fell in just 12 hours due to spillover from Bhutan, causing flooding and multiple landslides," Banerjee said. She urged stranded tourists not to panic and asked hotels not to overcharge them. "Their safety is our responsibility," she assured.

In Dhar Gaon and Nagrakata, heavy mudslides flattened homes, and at least 40 people were rescued. Key roads, including the Mirik–Sukhiapokhri route, are blocked, and communication lines to several hill settlements are down.

The IMD has issued a red alert for extremely heavy rainfall in sub-Himalayan West Bengal, warning of further landslides. An iron bridge linking Siliguri to Mirik-Darjeeling has also been damaged, cutting off vital access to the hills. —*PTI*

>>>More on Page 4

EC brings in 17 reforms for Bihar polls

PATNA, 5 OCT

Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar on Sunday announced 17 key reforms for the upcoming Bihar Assembly elections, aiming to enhance transparency, voter convenience, and electoral integrity. These initiatives will serve as a model for future elections across India.

Kumar confirmed that polls will be held before 22 November, when the current Assembly's term ends. The Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, launched on 24 June, was completed on time.

Among the major reforms:

- EPIC (Elector Photo Identity Card) delivery within 15 days of voter registration.
- Mobile deposit facilities at polling booths.
- 100% webcasting at all polling stations.
- Capping of voters per booth at 1,200 to reduce overcrowding.
- Mandatory VVPAT slip verification in cases of EVM mismatch complaints.

To accommodate the reduced voter cap, 12,817 new polling stations have been added, increasing the total to 90,712 across the state.

Bihar will also become the first state to use colour photographs and larger serial numbers on EVM ballots for better candidate identification.

Voters must deposit mobile phones outside polling stations, and booth-level officials will carry official ID cards for identification. Kumar also clarified that postal ballots will be counted before the final two EVM rounds, and discrepancies in Form 17C will require mandatory VVPAT verification.

> **With the successful completion of SIR, Bihar's voter list has been thoroughly revised. Over 65 lakh names were deleted prior to the draft roll's publication in August, and an additional 3.66 lakh were removed during the subsequent claims and objections phase**
>
> —Gyanesh Kumar, CEC

Bihar has 243 constituencies, including 38 SC and 2 ST-reserved seats. EC said these steps will make voting more accessible. —*PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

Israeli forces beat up Greta, make her kiss flag & parade

PHOTO: X

DUBAI, 5 OCT

Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg was reportedly mistreated and forced to wear and parade an Israeli flag while detained, according to activists deported to Turkey after taking part in a flotilla delivering aid to Gaza. Turkish activist Ersin Celik claimed Thunberg was dragged by her hair, beaten, made to crawl and forced to kiss the Israeli flag as a warning.

A total of 137 activists from various countries, including Turkey, the US, Malaysia, and Italy, were deported and arrived in Istanbul on Saturday. Malaysian Hazwani Helmi and American Windfield Beaver told Reuters they witnessed Thunberg's mistreatment, alleging detainees were denied clean food and water and had belongings and medicines confiscated.

Other activists accused Israeli authorities of physical and psychological abuse, including being forced to kneel face down and beaten for moving. Italian councillor Paolo Romano described severe mistreatment. An email from the Swedish foreign ministry revealed Thunberg was held in a bed-bug-infested cell with insufficient food and water, resulting in dehydration and rashes. Israel denied all allegations, calling them "complete lies," stating detainees received food, water, legal counsel, and their rights were respected. The claims remain unverified. —*Agencies*

>>>More on Page 5

Pregnant UP woman killed for dowry

MAINPURI, 5 OCT

A 21-year-old pregnant woman, Rajni Kumari, was allegedly beaten to death by her husband and in-laws over dowry in Gopalpur village, police said on Sunday.

Kumari, a resident of Rangpur village, married Sachin in April this year. Cops said her husband, his brothers Pranshu and Sahbag, and relatives Ram Nath, Divya, and Tina had demanded an additional Rs 5 lakh dowry to open a tent house. When the demand was not met, the accused allegedly tortured and fatally assaulted Kumari on Friday. Police said they performed her last rites in a field to destroy evidence. —*PTI*

Centre issues advisory as cough syrup kills 14 children

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

The Centre has issued an advisory to all States and UTs on the rational use of cough syrups in children, following reports of child deaths in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.

The Union Health Ministry cautioned that cough and cold medications should not be prescribed to children below two years, are generally not recommended for those under five, and for older children should be used only under careful clinical evaluation with strict dosing and supervision. Most acute cough illnesses in children are self-limiting and often resolve without drugs, the Ministry noted.

A joint team from the National Centre for Disease Control, National Institute of Virology, and Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation collected samples in coordination with Madhya Pradesh authorities.

Tests confirmed the absence of toxic contaminants diethylene glycol (DEG) and ethylene glycol (EG) in most syrups. Rajasthan cases also showed similar results. The Union Health Secretary will hold a video conference with all States and UTs to discuss 'rational use of cough syrups and drug quality,' involving health secretaries and drug controllers.

2 MORE DEATHS LINKED TO COLDRIF

Separately, two children, Kabir, 4, and Garmit, 2½, from Amla block in Betul district, died after allegedly consuming Coldrif syrup, later banned. Symptoms included kidney complications and abdominal swelling. Tamil Nadu authorities confirmed 48.6 per cent DEG in Coldrif (Batch No SR-13). The syrup is banned nationwide, with authorities seizing stock and prohibiting sales without prescription. The Ministry has urged all Health Departments, district authorities, and medical establishments to implement and disseminate the advisory to prevent further tragedies. —*Agencies*

>>>More on Page 4

- Centre cautioned that cough and cold medications should not be prescribed to children below two years, are generally not recommended for those under five.

DGCA cracks down on soaring airfares amid festivals

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

Aviation regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)will maintain strict oversight on airfares and flight capacities during the festive season to prevent excessive price surges. Though fares are deregulated, the DGCA can intervene if rates rise steeply on high-demand routes.

The Civil Aviation Ministry said the DGCA has reviewed fare trends and urged airlines to increase capacity. IndiGo will add around 730 flights across 42 sectors, Air India and Air India Express will operate 486 additional services, and SpiceJet will add 546 flights across 38 sectors.

Passengers are advised to book early and check airline websites for updated schedules. —*PTI*

DGCA PROBES INCIDENT

Emergency turbine deploys mid-descent on AI flight to UK

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

In a serious mid-air incident, a Ram Air Turbine (RAT) was uncommandedly deployed on an Air India Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner (VT-ANO) during final approach to Birmingham on 4 October. The aircraft, operating flight AI117 from Amritsar, landed safely.

The RAT, typically deployed in emergencies such as engine or electrical failure, uses wind to generate backup power. However, the deployment at around 400–500 feet altitude raised safety concerns.

Air India confirmed the incident, stating that all hydraulic and electrical systems were normal, and no abnormalities were reported by the pilots. Maintenance checks recommended by Boeing found no discrepancies, and the aircraft has been cleared for service.

PHOTO: PTI

The DGCA has launched a detailed investigation, while pilots' body Federation of Indian Pilots (FIP) urged a nationwide inspection of all Boeing 787 aircraft. The FIP cited Bus Power Control Unit (BPCU) fault as a possible cause, flagged by Aircraft Health Monitoring systems.

This incident follows the June 12 crash of AI171, another Dreamliner, that killed 260 people. Preliminary probe in that case revealed mid-air fuel control switch cut-off.

India currently operates 33 Boeing 787s, mostly with Air India. —*PTI*

Oppn BJP, JD(S) take a dig at Cong govt on caste survey

DKS advises officials not to ask personal questions

BENGALURU, 5 OCT

BJP and JD(S) have sharply criticised Congress-led state government over the ongoing Social and Educational Survey, widely known as the 'caste census'.

Both parties raised concerns over the survey's methodology and questioned the relevance of many questions being asked.

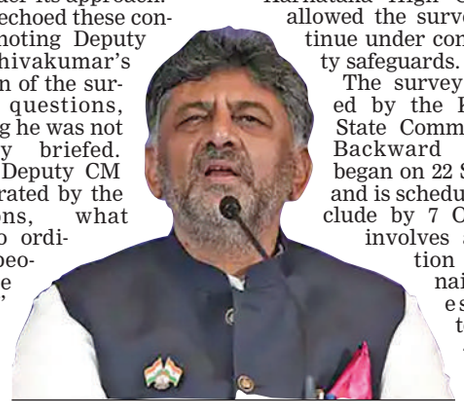
State BJP president BY Vijayendra pointed to Deputy Chief Minister **DK Shivakumar**'s refusal to answer several enumerator questions on Saturday as evidence of confusion caused by the survey. "Sixty questions are being asked, creating uncertainty among all communities," Vijayendra said. He accused the government of rushing the survey without adequate preparation, leading to criticism over involving differently-abled individuals as enumerators.

Vijayendra also suggested political motives behind the hurried survey, linking it to speculations about an impending Congress leadership change later this year. "Prime Minister Narendra Modi has already announced caste enumeration in the national census next year. There was no need to create such confusion in our state," he added.

Union Minister of State V Somanna labelled the survey as "unscientific" and riddled with "confusion and technical errors."

He urged the state government to halt the survey and reconsider its approach.

JD(S) echoed these concerns, noting Deputy CM Shivakumar's rejection of the survey questions, claiming he was not properly briefed. "If the Deputy CM is frustrated by the questions, what hope do ordinary people have?" the party posted on social media, questioning the survey's hurried conduct despite the central government's upcoming census plans.



Responding to the controversy, Deputy Chief Minister Shivakumar clarified on Sunday that he advised officials not to ask "personal" questions, such as those about livestock or gold possessions, during the survey.

He urged citizens to participate voluntarily and noted the Karnataka High Court had allowed the survey to continue under confidentiality safeguards.

The survey, conducted by the Karnataka State Commission for Backward Classes, began on 22 September and is scheduled to conclude by 7 October. It involves a 60-question questionnaire and is estimated to cost Rs 420 crore.

—PTI

VISIT MY MOSQUE

In a beautiful display of unity, St Joseph's College Principal Reverend Father Victor Lobo join members of Sikh community at the 'Visit My Mosque' event held at Masjid-E-Noor on Dickenson Road, Bengaluru, on Sunday. Organised by the Rahmath Group, this special initiative brings together people from different faiths to explore mosques, fostering friendship, understanding, and harmony across communities **PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD**

4 held for poisoning tiger in Hanur

MYSURU, 5 OCT

Forest department officials have arrested four individuals the suspected poisoning death of a 12-year-old male tiger in Pacchedoddi, Hanur taluk of Chamarajanagar district.

The tiger's mutilated carcass, missing its head and front limbs, was discovered in the forest on Thursday evening.

The arrested include Pacchamalla, Govindegowda, Sampu, and Ganesh, all residents of Pacchedoddi village. They were taken into custody on Saturday and brought to the Kollegal Sub-Divisional Hospital on Sunday for medical examination. Two migrant shepherds, Kambanna and Manjunath, have also been detained for questioning.

Preliminary investigations suggest that the tiger may have been poisoned in retaliation for preying on livestock. The case has raised concerns of poaching, and authorities are treating the matter seriously.

Following public outrage, State Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre ordered an inquiry into the incident and appointed PCCF Smitha Bijjur to lead the investigation.

The minister directed the PCCF to probe not only this incident but also poaching cases reported over the last three years in the region's wildlife sanctuary — which made headlines in June this year after five tiger deaths.

Minister Khandre has given the investigating officer eight days to submit a detailed report and has assured strict action against those involved in poaching and wildlife crimes. *—Salar News*

Chikkaballapur aims for 'clean district' tag

CHIKKABALLAPUR, 5 OCT

Once ranked among the top ten districts in India for air quality, Chikkaballapur is now aiming to become one of Karnataka's cleanest districts. As part of this effort, the Zilla Panchayat has launched a major initiative to transform "black spots"—illegal garbage dumping areas—into attractive public spaces or "comfort zones".

ZP CEO Naveen Bhat Y, who earlier served in the Health Department, said the goal is to ensure a clean, healthy, and pleasant environment for all. He has instructed officials to identify and beautify dumping-prone sites by installing benches, planting saplings, using painted tyres, and other creative means to make the locations more inviting.

Over 5,300 black spots have been identified across the district. Nearly 4,900 have already been cleared, and beautification is in progress. This initiative, under the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, follows the principle of "Ek Diwas, Ek Ghanta, Ek Saath" (One Day, One Hour, Together), with public participation from students, officials, and elected representatives. The campaign uses local funds and manpower from Gram Panchayats.

Chikkaballapur now ranks just behind Mandya and Tumakuru, and aims to become a model district. *—Salar News*

Over 5,300 black spots have been identified across the district and nearly 4,900 have already been cleared **PHOTO: SALAR**

BEATING THE HEAT, BENGALURU STYLE!

Pigeons perch lazily on a wire along Race Course Road in Bengaluru, soaking up the Sunday sun as the city sizzled at 29°C **PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD**

Man held for sharing pics of PM, Yogi in Mecca

KALABURAGI, 5 OCT

A 22-year-old youth has been arrested for allegedly editing and circulating a morphed image showing Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath holding a saffron flag atop the Kaaba, Islam's holiest site in Mecca.

The accused, Anand Guttedar, a resident of Ijeri village in Yadrami taluk under Jewargi Police Station limits, allegedly posted the edited photo on his Instagram account. The image quickly went viral, sparking outrage among local Muslim organisations.

Members of the Tipu Sultan Committee and Adarsha Grama Samiti Yalawar condemned the act, claiming it hurt religious sentiments. They demanded Guttedar's arrest and called on police to identify any others involved.

A delegation led by Mohiyuddin Inandar, Ibrahim Patel Yalawar, Saddam Hussain, Nisar Inandar, and Syed Nasir, along with local youths from Ijeri and Jewargi, visited Jewargi Police Station on Saturday night and filed a voluntary complaint, pressing for strict legal action.

Based on a complaint filed by Syed Patel, the police registered a case under relevant sections, arrested Guttedar, and launched an investigation into the incident. Authorities confirmed that further inquiries are ongoing to determine whether others were involved in circulating or promoting the morphed image.

Police officials stressed that action would be taken against anyone found attempting to hurt religious sentiments or incite communal tensions through social media. *—Salar News*

Belagavi gets swanky Smart Bus Terminal

BELAGAVI, 5 OCT

State Chief Minister inaugurated the newly-constructed Belagavi City Bus Terminal under the Smart City project and announced the addition of 700 buses to the North Western Karnataka Road Transport Corporation (NWKRTC) fleet, including 100 electric buses exclusively for Belagavi.

Constructed at a cost of Rs 49.20 crore under the Belagavi Smart City initiative, the terminal spans 2 acres and 19 guntas, funded equally by the central and state governments. A separate electric bus unit is being established on 5 acres and 5 guntas at Rs 24 crore, also with equal funding.

The modern facility features six floors, 28 platforms, and 1,365 daily trips, serving 143 locations, 56 within the city and 87 suburban areas within a 21 km radius. Daily footfall is around 96,000 passengers. Amenities include parking, commercial shops, drinking water, toilets, mother care rooms, accessible ramps, lifts, escalators, a police outpost, divisional office, and subway connectivity. Over the past two and a half years, 10,000 recruitments were made across transport corporations. The sector has won over 215 awards. The Shakti Scheme has provided Rs 565.48 crore worth of free tickets to women, at a total cost of Rs 14,456 crore, earning recognition in the Golden Book of World Records and International Book of World Records. *—Salar News*

The modern facility features six floors, 28 platforms, and 1,365 daily trips, serving 143 locations, 56 within the city and 87 suburban areas within a 21 km radius **PHOTO: SALAR**

Hunt on as KCOCA invoked in Bantwal murder

KURYAL, 5 OCT

Nearly five months after the killing of 32-year-old Abdul Rahiman in Bantwal's Kuryal district, police have arrested 13 accused and remanded them to judicial custody, while one is still on the run. The Karnataka Control of Organised Crime Act (KCOCA) has been invoked in the case to ensure stringent action, officials said.

The incident took place in May in the Erakodi area of Kuryal village, where Rahiman and Kalander Shafi were violently attacked. While Shafi suffered grievous injuries, Rahiman succumbed to his wounds.

Police have confirmed that one accused, Bharath Raj alias Bharath Kumdelu, 29, of Pudu village, remains absconding.

The case, registered on 27 May, includes multiple charges under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023, such as rioting, use of deadly weapons, grievous hurt, attempt to murder, and murder.

Authorities noted that the accused have a history of serious offences, including murder, attempted murder, and making provocative speeches that incited social unrest and communal tensions.

"Given the organised and violent nature of the crime, invoking KCOCA is essential for a comprehensive investigation and prosecution under the state's anti-organised crime laws," police said on Saturday. *—PTI*

SEE YOU AGAIN

Dasara jumbos bid farewell to Mysuru

MYSURU, 5 OCT

The 14 elephants that played a central role in the Mysuru Dasara festivities were given a warm and emotional farewell on Sunday at the Mysuru Palace premises.

The star of the show, Abhimanyu, once again drew loud cheers from the crowd for successfully carrying the golden howdah during the famed Jamboo Savari procession. The elephants, along with their mahouts, kavadis, and families, departed the city in trucks arranged by the Forest Department, returning to their respective forest camps.

The gentle giants — Abhimanyu, Bheema, Dhananjaya, Prashantha, Srikanta, Sugreeva, Ekalavya, Mahendra, Gopi, Kanjan, Hemavathy, Roopa, Kaveri, and Lakshmi — had spent nearly two months in the city, participating in rehearsals and festivities.

- The star of the show, Abhimanyu, drew loud cheers from the crowd for successfully carrying the golden howdah.

Before their departure, the elephants were offered a traditional pooja at the Kodisomeshwara Temple within the palace grounds and treated to coconuts, bananas, and sugarcane. Crowds gathered outside the palace and along the roads to bid farewell, clicking photos, taking selfies, and shouting, "Come back next year!" as the elephants raised their trunks in response. *—Salar News*

Before their departure, the elephants were offered a traditional pooja at the Kodisomeshwara Temple within the palace grounds and treated to coconuts, bananas, and sugarcan **PHOTO: SALAR**

Cong denies CM switch as BJP predicts change

MYSURU/KOPPAL, 5 OCT

BJP President BY Vijayendra on Sunday predicted a major political shake-up in the state after the Bihar elections, pointing to internal Congress debates over a possible change in Chief Minister.

He claimed rifts between CM Siddaramaiah and Deputy CM DK Shivakumar are growing, with Congress legislators openly discussing a leadership shift. "Siddaramaiah is in a hurry. His recent show of strength in Mysuru indicates this," Vijayendra said, citing comments from Congress MLAs H.D. Ranganath and L.R. Shivarame Gowda, who said Shivakumar may take over in November.

He criticised the Congress government as "zero development, anti-poor, and anti-farmer," and slammed its inadequate response to floods in North Karnataka. "The BJP will act as a responsible opposition," he added.

Meanwhile, Congress MLA and CM's Economic Advisor Basavaraj Rayareddy dismissed talk of a change as "irrelevant." Speaking in Koppal, he said Siddaramaiah was elected CM through a majority vote of Congress legislators and is expected to complete his five-year term. "We were not told Siddaramaiah would step down midway," he said, reiterating that any change is the party high command's decision. *—PTI*

Chhattisgarh rolls out bus service for villages

RAIPUR, 5 OCT

Chhattisgarh's newly launched Chief Minister Rural Bus Service Scheme (CMRBS) will provide public transport to remote villages, initially covering 250 communities. Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai flagged off the first buses on 5 October in Jagdalpur. The scheme aims to connect villages previously untouched by public transport, ensuring safe, timely, and affordable travel. In its first phase, 34 buses will run on 34 routes across the tribal-dominated Bastar and Surguja divisions, linking 250 villages in 11 districts. It will improve access to healthcare, education, employment, and markets, especially in areas with limited road connectivity. The scheme will boost the rural economy and promote equality. *—PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

'Actor Mohanlal felicitated with political interest'

ALAPPUZHA, 5 OCT

AICC general secretary KC Venugopal on Sunday criticised the Kerala government for politicising a programme to honour actor Mohanlal, held in Thiruvananthapuram following his Dadasaheb Phalke award win. Venugopal said the Congress had already conveyed its congratulations to the actor but called the government's use of the event for political purposes "highly objectionable." Alleging that the government was trying to distract from public resentment over its decisions, Venugopal also criticised it for violating Kerala High Court directives by spending Rs 8.5 crore of public funds on the Global Ayyappa Sangamam in Pampa. He urged the government to ensure such programmes are conducted without leading to unnecessary controversy.*—PTI*

Hagrama is Chief of Bodoland Territorial Council

KOKRAJHAR, 5 OCT

Hagrama Mohilary was sworn in as Chief Executive Member (CEM) of the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) in Kokrajhar, Assam, on Sunday, with former minister Rihon Daimary becoming deputy CEM. The Bodoland Peoples' Front won 28 of 40 seats in the BTC polls, emerging as the dominant party, while the United Peoples Party Liberal and BJP won seven and five seats respectively. BTC administers the Bodoland Territorial Region, covering Kokrajhar, Chirang, Baksa, Udalguri, and Tamulpur districts. Governor Laxman Prasad Acharya and Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma attended the ceremony and presented Mohilary with the traditional Bodo scarf, 'Arnai'. Elections were held on 22 September, the second since the 2020 Bodo Accord.*—PTI*

India, UK begin wargame in Indian Ocean

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

The navies of India and the UK have commenced an eight-day mega wargame in the Western Indian Ocean, aimed at strengthening military ties. The UK's Carrier Strike Group (CSG), led by HMS Prince of Wales, is taking part in Exercise Konkan. This event underscores the shared commitment to maintaining secure, open, and free seas, aligning with the "comprehensive strategic partnership" outlined in the India-UK Vision 2035, according to the Indian Navy. Commodore Chris Saunders, a defence adviser to the British High Commission, emphasised the exercise's potential to enhance capabilities and share best practices. He noted, "The UK and India are two carrier operating countries... as blue-water, multi-carrier navies."*—PTI*

Voter roll purified after 22 years in Bihar, says CEC

Cong says 23L Dalit, Muslim women voters have been deleted

PATNA, 5 OCT

Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar on Sunday announced that Bihar's electoral roll has been "purified" for the first time in 22 years, following the successful completion of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR). Addressing the media at the end of a two-day visit, Kumar said the initiative would soon be replicated nationwide.

Kumar, accompanied by Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi, said over 65 lakh names were removed from the roll before the draft publication in August. An additional 3.66 lakh names were deleted during the claims and objections phase. Those removed were found to be deceased, non-citizens, migrants, or registered in multiple locations.

While no category-wise breakdown was provided, the deletions sparked controversy. The CPI(ML) questioned the gender imbalance in the updated list and demanded clarification on the criteria behind the removal of voters. The BJP raised concerns about verification, particularly for 'parda nasheen' women, and urged stronger ID checks at booths.

Kumar assured that individuals who believe their names were wrongfully deleted could still appeal to district election offices.

Multiple parties urged the EC to schedule polling immediately after the Chhath festival, allowing returning migrants to vote. JD(U) supported a single-phase election, while LJP (Ram Vilas) and CPI(ML) favoured two phases. LJP also demanded basic amenities at booths, including security, toilets, drinking water, and electricity.

Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar with Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi during a meeting with heads/nodal officers of enforcement agencies in Bihar *PHOTO: PTI*

Meanwhile, Congress claimed that the names of nearly 23 lakh women have been removed from the voter list in Bihar under the SIR with the bulk of them being from 59 assembly seats where a "close contest" was witnessed in the 2020 elections. Reiterating its "vote chori" claims, the party also alleged that EC "targeted" Dalit and Muslim women voters whose names were dropped from the list as part of a "well-planned conspiracy" during SIR. *—PTI*

TENSION SIMMERS

Pak warns India against future military conflict

ISLAMABAD, 5 OCT

Pakistan Defence Minister Khawaja Asif issued a stern warning to India on Sunday regarding any potential military conflict with Pakistan, asserting that a "befitting response" would follow should hostilities arise.

His remarks come in the wake of statements from India's Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Army Chief Gen Upendra Dwivedi, who cautioned Pakistan against any "misadventures."

Air Chief Marshal AP Singh recently disclosed that at least a dozen of the Pakistani military aircraft, including US-origin F-16 jets, were either destroyed or damaged during Indian strikes in the Operation Sindoor carried out post Pahalgam attack. India has maintained that Pakistan requested an end to hostilities back in May, following extensive aerial and ground assaults on the various Pakistani military infrastructures.

Asif took to social media to sharply rebut what he deemed provocative rhetoric from India's top military and political leaders. He described their recent statements as a "failed attempt" to restore their waning credibility, attributing this desperation to the "pressure" stemming from their defeat in the May clashes.

Asif stated, "The statements of the Indian military and political leadership are a failed attempt to restore their tarnished reputation. After such a decisive defeat with a score of 0-6, if they try again, the score, God willing, will be far better than before." He concluded without providing further details on what he meant by the score of 0-6. *—PTI*

BLOOD IS THICKER....

BJP leaders said that MNS president Raj Thackeray and his cousin and Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray joining hands would not impact the outcome of the civic polls in Maharashtra *PHOTO: SCREENGRAB*

Manipur ambush aimed to undermine Prez rule: Intel

IMPHAL, 5 OCT

Intelligence department officials have suggested that the ambush on 19 September, which killed two Assam Rifles soldiers in Manipur, may have been a political contract killing aimed at undermining President's Rule.

Following the attack, security forces apprehended 15 members of the banned People's Liberation Army (PLA), including two key suspects, Thoungram Sadananda Singh and Khomdram Ojit Singh.

The PLA did not claim responsibility for the ambush, prompting speculation that senior leadership may not have authorised it. Observers underscore that vested interests are working to destabilise the current administration, which has temporarily halted severe ethnic violence.

The ongoing scrutiny of insurgent groups, such as UNLF and PLA, stems from fears that a revival of these outfits could threaten security further. Since May 2023, ethnic clashes have taken over 260 lives and displaced nearly 50,000 individuals in the region, stemming from land rights and political representation disputes.

Meanwhile, security forces in Manipur recovered large caches of arms and ammunition and arrested six militants across four districts.

Among the arrested were Kangleipak Communist Party cadres in Imphal East and four People's Liberation Army militants in Imphal West, Kakching, and Bishnupur districts. Cash and arms and ammunition were seized*—PTI*

Security forces apprehended 15 members of the People's Liberation Army for the ambush on a CRPF vehicle in Manipur *PHOTO: ANI*

TN moves SC against Guv's Kalaignar bill

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

The Tamil Nadu government has moved the Supreme Court against the governor's decision to reserve the Kalaignar University Bill, 2025 for the consideration of the President instead of granting assent to the proposed law as advised by the state Cabinet.

The state government has sought direction from the top court to declare the governor's decision and "all consequential acts arising therefrom" as illegal, patently unconstitutional, and void ab-initio.

Governor RN Ravi had earlier reserved for President Droupadi Murmu's consideration the Kalaignar University Bill. The Bill proposes the establishment of Kalaignar University in Kumbakonam by bifurcating Bharathidasan University, aiming to cater to the higher education needs of students in Ariyalur, Nagapattinam, Thanjavur, and Tiruvarur districts. *—PTI*

Man nabbed for helping Pahalgam terrorists

SRINAGAR, 5 OCT

Mohammad Yousuf Katari, a 26-year-old Over Ground Worker (OGW), has been arrested by Jammu and Kashmir Police for allegedly assisting the terrorists responsible for the 22 April Pahalgam attack that claimed 26 lives, primarily tourists. Katari reportedly met with the assailants—Sulieman alias Asif, Jibran, and Hamza Afghani—on four occasions in the Zabarwan hills, providing essential logistical support, including an Android phone charger.

His arrest follows a detailed investigation bolstered by forensic analysis of evidence collected during Operation Mahadev, in which three terrorists involved in the massacre were killed. Police linked Katari to the case after tracing the original owner of the charger, leading to his capture.

Officials noted that Katari had been a vital resource for the terror group, assisting the attackers in navigating challenging terrain. NIA may probe the case. *—PTI*

Cuttack tense after violence over idol immersion

CUTTACK/ BHUBANESWAR, 5 OCT

Cuttack remained tense on Sunday after fresh violence following a group clash during a Durga idol immersion procession two days earlier. Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and BJD chief Naveen Patnaik appealed for calm and communal harmony.

The government suspended internet services from 7 pm Sunday to 7 pm Monday in areas under the Cuttack Municipal Corporation, Cuttack Development Authority, and adjoining 42 Mauza region to curb misinformation.

Tension escalated after a VHP motorcycle rally defied prohibitory orders, passing through sensitive areas including Dargah Bazar, the epicentre of the earlier violence, with participants chanting 'Jai Shri Ram.'

Majhi expressed sorrow over the disturbances, warning strict action against troublemakers. Patnaik urged citizens to uphold Odisha's peace-loving image. Congress MLA Sofia Firdus also condemned the violence, calling for punishment of those identified through CCTV footage.

Six people have been arrested, and a 12-hour bandh has been called by the VHP for 6 October. *— PTI*

SIT chief begins probe in TVK's rally

KARUR, 5 OCT

The SIT headed by senior IPS officer Asra Garg, on Sunday conducted its probe into a stampede at TVK chief Vijay's rally here on 27 September in which 41 people died and nearly 60 were injured.

The special investigation team (SIT) was set up on the basis of the Madras High Court order on 3 October.

The SIT comprises 11 police officers, including two superintendents of police among others, Garg said.

Earlier in the day, he visited the spots in Velusamypuram where the stampede took place.

Later, speaking to reporters, he said, "Hon'ble High Court has formed the Special Investigation Team (SIT). As you all see, we are conducting the investigation today by visiting the spots (where the incident occurred)."

One additional SP, two deputy superintendents of police and five inspectors are also part of the team. *—PTI*

AAP to field Gupta in by-polls

CHANDIGARH, 5 OCT

The ruling Aam Aadmi Party is likely to field industrialist Rajinder Gupta as its candidate for the Rajya Sabha bypoll in Punjab on 24 October.

The bypoll is being held to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of AAP's Sanjeev Arora, who stepped down from the Upper House following his election to the state assembly.

Arora, whose term was to end on 9 April, 2028, is presently serving as a minister in the Punjab Cabinet led by Bhagwant Mann.

The Chairman emeritus of the Trident Group, Gupta resigned as the vice-chairman of the State Economic Policy and Planning Board and as chairperson of the Kali Devi temple committee. *—PTI*

Ethanol blending profited sugar mills: Amit Shah

AHILYANAGAR, 5 OCT

Union Minister Amit Shah credited ethanol blending with revolutionising the financial positions of sugar mills, significantly benefiting India's sugar cooperatives sector since Prime Minister Narendra Modi took office. Addressing a farmers' rally after inaugurating an expansion at the Dr Vitthalrao Vikhe Patil Cooperative Sugar Factory, which has increased its crushing capacity to 10,000 tonnes per day, Shah stated, "The sugar cooperative sector has benefited immensely after Narendra Modi became the prime minister." He encouraged cooperatives to modernise for long-term sustainability.

The government has allocated Rs 10,000 crore to promote ethanol production, with Shah asserting, "Ethanol blending has transformed the balance sheets of sugar mills. If 20 per cent of the earnings are reinvested in expansion, the coming generations will benefit."

He urged cooperatives to produce multi-feed ethanol during the non-crushing season and highlighted that the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) would provide loans for such upgrades. *—PTI*

DEMANDS JUDICIAL PROBE

Wangchuk asks people to fight in Gandhian way

LEH, 5 OCT

Jailed activist Sonam Wangchuk has appealed to the people of Ladakh to continue with the ongoing struggle for statehood in the true Gandhian way of non-violence and demanded an independent judicial inquiry into the killing for four people in the violence in Leh.

Wangchuk conveyed the message through the legal advisor of Leh Apex Body, Haji Mustafa, who along with the activist's elder brother Ka Tsetan Dorjey Ley, met him at Jodhpur jail in Rajasthan on 4 October.

Wangchuk said that unless there is an independent judicial inquiry into the killing, "I am prepared to stay in jail".

Release Sonam Wangchuk Save Democracy!
Stand with Ladakh Stand with Sonam!
Democracy Means Freedom, Not Fear!
OUR FUTURE OUR RIGHT
जवाब दो
सोनम वांगचुक

People take part in a protest march at Chhatrapati Sambhaji Raje Garden, in Pune on Sunday demanding the release of Wangchuk *PHOTO: PTI*

He was detained in Leh under the stringent National Security Act, for inciting the violence in Leh.

The Supreme Court will hear a plea filed by Wangchuk's wife, Gitanjali J Angmo, challenging the climate activist's detention under the NSA and seeking his immediate release. She also demanded access to her husband, telephonic and in person.

Mustafa posted Wangchuk's "message" on his personal social media accounts, including X and Facebook, on Sunday after meeting the activist.

"I am doing well, both physically and mentally and thank everyone for their concern and prayers. My heartfelt condolences to the families of those people who lost their lives and my prayers with people who are injured and are arrested," Wangchuk said.

"I stand firmly with Apex Body and the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) and the people of Ladakh in our genuine constitutional demand ……..I am with them," Wangchuk said.

The Ladakh administration had ordered a magisterial probe into the violence,

Meanwhile, KDA and Leh Apex Body have decided to not sit for talks with the Centre till a judicial inquiry is ordered and those detained, including Wangchuk, are released. *—PTI*

J&K school staff told not to criticise government online

SRINAGAR, 5 OCT

The chief education officer (CEO) of Baramulla in Jammu and Kashmir directed teaching and non-teaching staff employed to refrain from criticising government policies on social media, warning them of punitive action, including dismissal from service. In a circular, they were asked to adhere to the guidelines. The employees are not barred from using social media platforms for "positive and constructive purposes". Pulwama MLA and PDP leader Waheed Para slammed the order, saying it stops people from "raising their voices". The state government had earlier informed the Assembly that it was drafting a new media policy aimed at regulating digital platforms, following the much-criticised 2020 New Media Policy formulated by the BJP. —*PTI*

Cops seize 1,600 kg firecrackers in Delhi raid

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

In a major operation ahead of Deepavali, Delhi Police confiscated approximately 1,600kg of prohibited firecrackers and arrested six individuals across the capital city. The operation, led by the crime branch, was executed in Dwarka, Rohini, Uttam Nagar, Shastri Nagar, Mukundpur, and Shahdara. Deputy Commissioner of Police Pankaj Kumar stated, "These actions align with the recent Supreme Court directives aimed at curbing firecracker storage and sales to combat air pollution." Among the arrested is Akash Gupta, 24, a grocery shop owner, who allegedly sourced fireworks from Chander Kant, 36, later apprehended with 400kg. Additional arrests included Rahul Sagar, 34 and Sonu, 30 in the operation. —*PTI*

Kerala designer held with Rs 6 cr hybrid ganja

KOCHI, 5 OCT

Customs officials on Sunday seized six kg of hybrid ganja from a fashion designer at the international airport in Nedumbassery here. The accused, Abdul Jaleel Jasmal, from Kodungalloor, had arrived on a flight from Bangkok and was intercepted by the air intelligence unit. Six packets of hybrid ganja were seized from his handbag. The contraband is estimated to be worth around Rs 6 crore in the underground markets. Preliminary investigation revealed that Jasmal had been hired by a narcotics gang to smuggle the substance. He was reportedly paid Rs 1 lakh and provided with a flight ticket for the operation. A probe is underway to trace the network behind the smuggling.—*PTI*

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

Shubhanshu is the face of 'Viksit Bharat Buildathon'

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

Indian astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla is the brand ambassador of "Viksit Bharat Buildathon", a nationwide innovation movement set to engage students from schools having classes 6-12. The Buildathon, the largest-ever school hackathon, will mobilise more than one crore students from 1.5 lakh schools across the country to ideate, design, and develop prototypes under four themes - Aatmanirbhar Bharat, Swadeshi, Vocal for Local and Samriddhi. The hackathon is being organised by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with the Atal Innovation Mission.The Buildathon was launched on September 23 and the registrations are open till October 6. The live Buildathon will be held on 13 October and the winners will be announced in December. —*PTI*

Tourists stranded in rain-hit Darjeeling

Rains have swept away homes, bridges; National Highways blocked, villages cut off

DARJEELING, 5 OCT

A post-Durga Pooja vacation turned into a nightmare for hundreds of tourists in Darjeeling as relentless rainfall triggered massive landslides, killing at least 20 people, including children, and leaving scores injured or stranded across Mirik, Kalimpong and surrounding areas.

The normally bustling hill station, famed for its tea and toy train, has been reduced to rubble in places. National Highways 10 and 55 remain blocked, severing access to Siliguri and isolating remote villages. Bridges have collapsed, roads lie buried under thick mud, and homes have been swept away.

"We heard a deafening sound around 2am, and the ground shook," said Praveen Sinha, a tourist from Kolkata staying in Mirik. "By morning, the road was gone—just a heap of mud and trees. We're completely cut off. We just want to go home safely."

A portion of Balason Bridge collapses after heavy rainfall triggers landslides in Darjeeling on Sunday *PHOTO: PTI*

Ananya Das, who travelled from Mumbai with her husband and 5-year-old daughter, said, "We haven't slept properly since last night. The hotel staff are kind, but they're as helpless as we are."

In a high-level meeting at Nabanna, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee announced a 24x7 control room and said she was monitoring the situation closely. She confirmed widespread flooding and damage across Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Jalpaiguri, and Alipurduar. Tourists have been urged to stay indoors, and rescue operations are ongoing.

Darjeeling police issued an emergency contact number (+91 91478 89078) and asked visitors not to venture out.

Rescue teams, including disaster response forces, are working to clear routes and reach isolated areas. Helicopter aid may be deployed too. —*PTI*

Bhutan warns West Bengal of floods

KOLKATA, 5 OCT

North Bengal has been warned of potential flooding after Bhutan reported the Wangchu River overflowing a dam. Authorities in Thimphu said gates at the Tala Hydropower Dam failed to open, and downstream districts Jalpaiguri and Cooch Behar, already waterlogged from heavy rainfall, could be affected. The National Centre for Hydrology and Meteorology in Bhutan urged West Bengal to "prepare for eventualities" and promised regular updates. —*Agencies*

J'khand traders incur losses in festive season

RANCHI, 5 OCT

Torrential rain during Durga Pooja dealt a blow to the small and medium traders in Jharkhand, who had hoped to cash in during the festive sales. Traders said that the losses could range from 25 per cent to 60 per cent in Ranchi, Jamshedpur and Dhanbad. The businesses of these traders were already hit be e-commerce operators.

They had invested in purchasing the wares and booking spaces for stalls during the Pooja. —*PTI*

MP KIDS DEAD

Doctor held for giving cough syrup that killed 14

CHHINDWARA, 5 OCT

Police have arrested a doctor for alleged negligence and registered a case against the manufacturer of a 'toxic' cough syrup after the death of 14 children in Chhindwara due to suspected renal failure.

The Madhya Pradesh government has banned the sale of Coldrif cough syrup, which contains a highly toxic substance.

Of the children who died, 11 were from Parasia sub-division, two from Chhindwara city and one from Chaurai tehsil.

The Coldrif cough syrup was manufactured by Sresan Pharmaceutical in Tamil Nadu's Kancheepuram. A case was registered against

the company and Praveen Soni, who, despite being a government doctor here, practised at a private clinic and prescribed the syrup.

A special police team arrested Soni from Rajpal Chowk in Chhindwara on 4 September. The doctor has been booked for prescribing the medicine even after its adverse effects on children for nearly a month. The manufacturer was charged with supplying contaminated syrup.

MP Chief Minister Mohan Yadav said strict action will be taken against those responsible. A financial assistance of Rs 4 lakh will be provided to the families of each of the deceased children.

The Tamil Nadu drug control authorities declared the Coldrif syrup sample as adulterated for containing diethylene glycol, a poisonous substance. It was banned in Tamil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh. .

Samples from the affected children were to the National Institute of Virology in Pune.

The Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation initiated risk-based inspections at the manufacturing units of 19 drugs, across six states. —*PTI*

Stress in Army job can cause cancer: HC

CHANDIGARH, 5 OCT

The Punjab and Haryana High Court has upheld a special family pension for the deceased son of an Army personnel who succumbed to cancer, dismissing the Centre's plea against the decision. The court asserted that prolonged stress during military service could contribute to the development of cancer.

A division bench comprising Justices Harsimran Singh Sethi and Vikas Suri rejected the Centre's challenge to a 2019 Armed Forces Tribunal ruling that mandated the grant of the pension to Kumari Salochna Verma, whose son, diagnosed with retroperitoneal sarcoma, passed away on 24 June, 2009.

Verma's counsel had argued that the disease was not attributable to military service, referencing a medical board's findings. However, the court cited the precedent

set in Dharamvir Singh versus Union of India (2013), emphasising that if a soldier is deemed fit upon enrolment and later contracts an illness, it is presumed to be aggravated by military duties.

In its ruling, the bench stated, "For a period of six years, the son of the respondent... was serving in the Army... stress and strain for a prolonged time resulted in cancer." It concluded by indicating that the absence of substantial evidence against the military attribution supported Verma's claim for the pension. —*PTI*

11 chargesheeted in Khalistani attack on Punjab police stn

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has filed charges against 11 individuals linked to a terror attack on a Punjab police station, orchestrated by the banned Khalistani group Babbar Khalsa International (BKI). On Saturday, the accused were charged under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, the Arms Act, and the Explosive Substances Act, with the chargesheet submitted to a special NIA court in Mohali, Punjab.

Another 11 individuals involved in the case remain at large. Foreign operatives associated with BKI, including Harpreet Singh alias Happy Passia, Mannu Agwan, and Gurpreet Singh alias Gopi Navasherian, publicly claimed responsibility for the 6 April attack—a rocket-propelled grenade assault on the Qila Lal Singh police station.

The NIA's investigation revealed that foreign-based terrorists exploited personal ties and social media to radicalise and recruit vulnerable Punjabi youth to further their anti-India agenda. The agency has intensified its continuing efforts to apprehend the absconders and other unidentified conspirators. —*PTI*

Sabarimala idols' gold plating sponsor grilled

T'PURAM, 5 OCT

Unnikrishnan Potty, a businessman from Bengaluru, was questioned for the second time by the Travancore Devaswom Board (TDB) Vigilance team regarding the gold electroplating of the Dwarapalaka idols at Sabarimala. This investigation, ordered by the Kerala High Court, is examining alleged irregularities linked to Potty's sponsorship in 2019.

Potty was interrogated for nearly four hours on Saturday and for a further two hours on Sunday. According to TDB vigilance sources, investigators are preparing a report for the High Court, which will include Potty's statements.

The inquiries were prompted by allegations from the TDB and state government regarding a reduction in the weight of the gold-clad idols after their electroplating at a Chennai firm. —*PTI*

Zubeen's death: Assam seeks help of S'pore NRIs

An elephant calf, born in the Kaziranga National Park in Assam, was named after singer Zubeen Garg's popular song 'Mayabini' *PHOTO: X*

GUWAHATI, 5 OCT

Assam's Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has stated that the police inquiry into the death of singer Zubeen Garg will be hindered unless members of the Assamese community in Singapore cooperate. Garg tragically passed away under puzzling circumstances while swimming during a yacht trip on 19 September. He was in Singapore for the 4th North East India Festival, organised by Shyamkanu Mahanta.

Sarma urged Assam residents to encourage their relatives abroad to participate in the investigation, emphasising that locals cannot be compelled to return: "If they do not come, we will not be able to complete the inquiry." The state CID has summoned members of the Assam Association to present themselves by 6 October.

With numerous FIRs filed against Mahanta and others, concerns have emerged regarding claims of possible poisoning by one of Garg's band members. —*PTI*

WOMAN ACQUITTED IN RS 50 LAKH CHEQUE BOUNCE CASE AFTER 8 YEARS

THANE, 5 OCT

A Thane court has acquitted businesswoman Sharmila Digamber Kapote in a 2017 cheque bounce case, citing serious inconsistencies in the complainant's version.

The case, filed by retired PSU employee Popatrao Bhausaheb Chaudhary, involved a failed 2016 property deal in which Chaudhary claimed to have paid Rs 50 lakh- Rs 30 lakh in cash and Rs 20 lakh via RTGS — for a shop in Kalwa, Thane. After the sale collapsed over mortgage issues, Kapote allegedly issued three refund cheques that were later dishonoured.

The court ruled that the complainant failed to prove the payments or a legally enforceable debt.

It noted discrepancies in cash source, RTGS dates and the cheques. —*PTI*

Teacher suspended over misspelt cheque

SHIMLA, 5 OCT

A government school teacher in Himachal Pradesh's Sirmaur district has been suspended after a cheque he issued, riddled with glaring spelling mistakes, went viral on social media, raising concerns about the quality of education in state schools.

The Directorate of School Education acted against drawing teacher Atter Singh from Government Senior

Secondary School, Rohnat, after his Rs 7,616 cheque dated 25 September went viral for spelling "Seven Thousand Six Hundred Sixteen" as "Saven Thursday Six HarendraSixtey".

Director of School Education Ashish Kohli summoned Singh and the school principal for an explanation. Singh admitted the mistake was inadvertent, but his defence was rejected.

Kohli warned that negligence damaging the department's reputation would invite strict action. Disciplinary proceedings were ordered with a report to be submitted soon. —*PTI*

ENHANCING DIAGNOSTICS

ICMR approves 'Made-in-India' TB tests

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

In a boost to India's fight against tuberculosis (TB), the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has validated new indigenously developed tools that could bolster the country's diagnostic capacity and offer a cheaper detection option.

Eliminating TB depends on the ability to detect early, accurately and universally to initiate treatment and curb community transmission.

Among the recently validated tools is Quantiplus MTB FAST detection kit, developed by Huwel Lifesciences in Telangana.

Quantiplus is the first open system RT-PCR assay validated for the detection of lung TB as it can run on any existing PCR machine and is not limited to proprietary platforms.

"This means, laboratories across India, even those without specialised 'closed' equipment, can now expand rapid molecular TB testing using standard PCR machines," a source explained.

Furthermore, Quantiplus can test as many as 96 samples simultaneously.

This new approach empowers public sector laboratories to scale up testing without incurring heavy investment in new machinery, enabling broader, more affordable access.

The second homegrown innovation validated by the ICMR is UniAMP MTB Nucleic Acid Test Card, also manufactured by Huwel Lifesciences.

This marks a milestone in patient-friendly diagnostics as now patients can be tested using non-invasive tongue swabs instead of sputum samples which are difficult to produce, especially for children and the elderly.

This reflects India's resolve to strengthen indigenous research and close gaps in detection and treatment.—*PTI*

3 Assam profs named in world's top 2% scientists

GUWAHATI, 5 OCT

- Those honoured are Bhupendra Nath Goswami, a leading meteorologist, Prodeep Phukan and Bipan Hazarika.

Three professors from Gauhati University have been named among the world's top two per cent of scientists in a global list compiled by Stanford University.

Those honoured are Professor of Excellence Bhupendra Nath Goswami, a leading meteorologist; Professor Prodeep Phukan from the Department of Chemistry; and Professor Bipan Hazarika from the Department of Mathematics. All three were recognised in the career-long impact category for their sustained research contributions.

Stanford University prepares the annual rankings using strict criteria, including citation metrics, h-index, co-authorship-adjusted hm-index, and a composite score known as the c-score.

The 2025 list highlights India's growing research presence, with 6,239 researchers in the single-year category and 3,372 in the career-long category. Vice-Chancellor Nani Gopal Mahanta said the recognition was a matter of pride for the university, reflecting the innovation of the faculty. —*PTI*

BOYCOTTING ELECTIONS

Demonstrators with a Georgian and Ukrainian national flags stand behind a burning barricade not far from a police line during an Opposition rally in the city center of Tbilisi, Georgia, boycotting the municipal elections and calling for the release of political opponents ***PHOTO: PTI***

Trump sees shutdown as opportunity to shrink govt

President Donald Trump has embraced the federal shutdown as an "unprecedented opportunity" to slash spending and shrink government, but new rounds of targeted spending cuts from the White House aimed at Democratic states and priorities are raising concerns among Republicans that they may be at risk of ceding their political advantage.

Republicans in Congress believe they hold the upper hand in four-day-old stalemate, as Democrats voted against measures to keep the government open because they want to attach additional policy measures. But the sweeping cuts to home-state projects — and the threat of mass federal firings — have some in the GOP worried the White House may be going too far and potentially give Democrats a way out of their tight spot.

As hopes faded Friday for a quick end to the shutdown — with Democrats holding firm in a key Senate vote — the White House signalled more layoffs and agency cuts could follow. Trump shared a video Thursday night portraying budget director Russ Vought as the grim reaper. The cuts are raising fresh questions about whether voters want a government that uses discretionary power to punish political opponents — and whether Republicans may face electoral consequences for the White House's actions.

Since the shutdown began, Trump has moved to cancel $7.6 billion in clean energy grants across 16 states, all of which voted for Democrat Kamala Harris in last year's presidential election. On Friday, the administration announced an additional $2 billion cut, this time to a major public transit project in Chicago. Press secretary Karoline Leavitt said the administration is also reviewing funding to Portland, Oregon.

"He's just literally took out the map and pointed to all the blue states," Oregon Senator Ron Wyden, a Democrat, told AP.

Democrats have seized on the shutdown and cuts as evidence of Trump's overreach. There could be near-term fallout, including in next month's governor's races in New Jersey and Virginia. Democratic candidates in both states have linked their GOP opponents to Trump's policies and criticised them for not standing up to his latest moves.

In New Jersey, Democratic Rep Mikie Sherrill blasted Republican Jack Ciattarelli over Trump's move to block funding for a long-delayed rail tunnel between New York and New Jersey, saying it will hurt commuters and put thousands of good-paying union jobs at risk.

In Virginia, Democrat Abigail Spanberger noted the state already has been hit hard by job cuts made by Trump's Department of Government Efficiency. She said Republican Lt Gov Winsome Earle-Sears is "refusing to stand up for our workforce and our economy."

Earle-Sears said Democrats are to blame for the shutdown, and said Spanberger did nothing to encourage the state's Democratic senators to stop it.

The administration's targeting of blue states has already begun to ripple through states like California, where $1.2 billion in funding for the state's hydrogen hub was scrapped. Democratic Gov Gavin Newsom said it threatens more than 200,000 jobs. Democratic groups have moved quickly to tie local Republicans to the fallout. American Bridge 21st Century, a Democratic group, has highlighted swing-district Republicans in states where cuts have occurred, accusing them of having "sat by and let it happen."

The cuts are also complicating Senate negotiations, prolonging a shutdown that could leave thousands of federal workers without pay and halt key programs. Senator Gary Peters, a Michigan Democrat whom Republicans have tried to sway, said "there's no question" the cuts have damaged talks. Senator Angus King, a Maine independent, broke from Democrats earlier this week to support the GOP funding bill. He called the cuts "so utterly partisan as to be almost laughable."

Many Senate Republicans have not endorsed Vought's approach directly, instead blaming Democrats for rejecting funding bills and opening the door to the White House's more aggressive moves.

"It's the reason why Republicans have continued to support a continuation," said GOP Senator Mike Rounds of South Dakota.

"It's not like we promoted it," said Rounds. "We've done everything we can right now to try to avoid it." —*PTI*

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

SALAR سالار بنگلور

Journalists risk lives to tell Gaza's story

Minutes after journalists gathered outside a Gaza hospital to survey the damage of an Israeli strike, Ibrahim Qannan pointed his camera up at the battered building as the others climbed its external stairs.

Then Qannan watched in horror — while broadcasting live — as a second strike killed the friends and colleagues he knew so well.

"We live side by side with death," Qannan, a correspondent for the Cairo-based Al-Ghad TV said in an interview.

"I still cannot believe that five of our colleagues were struck in front of me on camera and I try to hold up and look strong to carry the message. May no one feel such feelings. They are painful feelings."

The deaths of the five journalists in the 25 August strikes on Nasser Hospital add to a toll of nearly 200 news workers killed by Israeli forces while working to bring Gaza's story to the world. Those killed in the attack, which left a total of 22 people dead, included Mariam Dagga, 33, a visual journalist who freelanced for The Associated Press (AP) and other outlets.

Like the vast majority of Gaza's population, most of its journalists have seen their homes destroyed or damaged during the war and have been repeatedly displaced after evacuation orders by Israel's military. Many have mourned the deaths of family members.

But journalists and advocates say the trials go well beyond.

For journalists in Gaza, "it's about dying or living, escaping violence or not. It's something we cannot compare (to other wartime journalism) at any level," said Mohamed Salama, a former reporter in Egypt who is now an academic, researching the life of news workers in the Strip.

Israel calls strikes a 'tragic mishap'

After the August strikes, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu insisted that the military was not deliberately targeting journalists and called the killings a "tragic mishap."

After a preliminary review, the military said the attack had targeted what it believed to be a Hamas surveillance camera and that six of the people killed were militants, but offered no evidence.

Late last month, the AP and Reuters — which lost a cameraman and a freelancer in the attack on the hospital — demanded that Israel provide a full account of what happened and "take every step to protect those who continue to cover this conflict." The news organisations issued their statement on the one-month anniversary of the strikes.

Israeli officials have previously accused some journalists in Gaza of being current or former militants. They include Anas al-Sharif, a well-known correspondent for Al Jazeera who was killed in an early August strike on a media tent outside another Gaza hospital. Four other journalists were also killed in the attack.

There is a long, sometimes tragic history of journalists risking personal safety to cover conflicts. But the risks, trials and toll of doing so have never been higher than they are in Gaza right now, experts say.

Since the war was ignited by the Hamas attack on Israel nearly two years ago, 195 Palestinian media workers have been killed by Israeli forces in Gaza, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists.

In a separate survey of Gaza news workers last year by Arab Reporters for Investigative Journalism, nine in 10 said their homes had been destroyed in the war. About one in five said they had been injured and about the same number had lost family members. That was before Israel resumed fighting in March after a brief ceasefire.

Journalists pressured by violence, hunger

Qannan, who saw his colleagues killed in the August strike, said Israel's refusal to let foreign reporters enter Gaza puts tremendous pressure on local journalists, many of whom see their work as a duty to their fellow Palestinians.

He recounted working without a break since the war's start, grabbing sleep between live broadcasts. His family has been displaced seven times. Now he and other journalists struggle to find food. In a recent social media post, he and fellow journalists gathered to cook a kilogram of pasta that had cost them the equivalent of $60.

Yet when he goes on camera, Qannan said he makes an effort to appear strong in hopes of reassuring viewers. In fact, he and others journalists are exhausted and scared, he said.

Another Gaza journalist, Mohammed Subeh, said the Israeli strike that killed the Al Jazeera reporter earlier in August left him with shrapnel lodged in his back and an injury to his foot. But hospitals are so overwhelmed with critical cases that he's been unable to get treatment.

Subeh, who works for the Saudi news channel, said he'd thought repeatedly of quitting and trying to flee. But, despite the extreme difficulties and dangers, he can't bring himself to do it. —*PTI*

Since the war started nearly two years ago, 195 Palestinian media workers have been killed by Israeli forces in Gaza, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists ***PHOTO: X***

Greta Thunberg dragged by hair, forced to kiss Israel flag

The environmental campaigner Greta Thunberg has told Swedish officials she is being subjected to harsh treatment in Israeli custody after her detention and removal from a flotilla carrying aid to Gaza, according to correspondence seen by the Guardian.

According to the correspondence, Israeli forces are also reported by another detainee to have taken photographs where Thunberg was allegedly forced to hold flags. The identity of the flags are unknown.

In an email sent by the Swedish foreign ministry to people close to Thunberg, and seen by the Guardian, an official who has visited the activist in prison said she claimed she was detained in a cell infested with bedbugs, with too little food and water.

"The embassy has been able to meet with Greta," reads the email. "She informed of dehydration. She has received insufficient amounts of both water and food. She also stated that she had developed rashes which she suspects were caused by bedbugs. She spoke of harsh treatment and said she had been sitting for long periods on hard surfaces."

"Another detainee reportedly told another embassy that they had seen her [Thunberg] being forced to hold flags while pictures were taken. She wondered whether images of her had been distributed," the Swedish ministry's official added.

The allegation was corroborated by at least two other members of the flotilla who had been detained by Israeli forces and released on Saturday.

"They dragged little Greta [Thunberg] by her hair before our eyes, beat her, and forced her to kiss the Israeli flag. They did everything imaginable to her, as a warning to others," the Turkish activist ErsinÇelik, a participant in the Sumud flotilla, told Anadolu news agency.

Lorenzo D'Agostino, a journalist and another flotilla participant, said after returning to Istanbul that Thunberg was "wrapped in the Israeli flag and paraded like a trophy" – a scene described with disbelief and anger by those who witnessed it.

Thunberg is among 437 activists, parliamentarians and lawyers who were part of the Global Sumud flotilla, a coalition of more than 40 vessels carrying humanitarian aid whose goal was to breach Israel's 16-year maritime blockade of Gaza.

Between Thursday and Friday, Israeli forces intercepted all the boats and arrested every crew member onboard. Most of them are being held at Ketziot, also known as Ansar III, a high-security prison in the Negev desert used primarily to detain Palestinian security prisoners, many of whom Israel accuses of involvement in militant or terrorist activities.

Greta Thunberg is among 437 activists, parliamentarians and lawyers who were part of the Global Sumud flotilla, carrying humanitarian aid to Gaza ***PHOTO: SCREENGRAB***

In the past, activists detained by Israel were not criminally prosecuted and instead their presence was treated as an immigration matter.

According to lawyers from the NGO Adalah, the rights of the crew members have been "systematically violated", activists denied water, sanitation, medication and immediate access to their legal representatives "in clear breach of their fundamental rights to due process, impartial trial and legal representation".

The Italian legal team representing the flotilla confirmed those detained were left "for hours without food or water – until late last night", with the exception of "a packet of crisps handed to Greta and shown to the cameras". Lawyers also reported instances of verbal and physical abuse.

During a visit to Ashdod on Thursday night, Israel's far-right national security minister, Itamar Ben-Gvir, was filmed calling the activists "terrorists" as he stood in front of them.

Some activists were heard shouting: "Free Palestine."

Ben-Gvir has previously called for the activists to be jailed rather than deported.

After their arrest, the flotilla's legal team expressed concern over the treatment the crew members might face, particularly those who had previously been detained by Israeli authorities after attempts to break Gaza's naval blockade. This marks the second time Thunberg has been arrested alongside other flotilla members, after a similar attempt earlier this year ended with the activists' arrest and deportation.

Baptiste André, a French doctor who was on one of the boats of the flotilla in June, told reporters upon his return to France that he witnessed Israeli border agents mock and deliberately deprive passengers of sleep, in particular Thunberg.

The Swedish official said in the email that Thunberg was asked by Israeli authorities to sign a document.

"She expressed uncertainty about what the document meant and did not want to sign anything she did not understand," reads the email. The Swedish ministry's official wrote that Thunberg has had access to legal counsel.

The Guardian contacted the Israel Prison Service, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) and the Israeli ministry for foreign affairs but none have yet responded to a request for comment.

Greta Thunberg ***PHOTO: SCREENGRAB***

The Swedish foreign ministry said its embassy officials had visited nine detained Swedes on Friday: "The Swedish embassy in Tel Aviv remains in contact with Israeli authorities to stress the importance of swift processing and the possibility of returning home to Sweden. Based on discussions with detained individuals, the importance of addressing individual medical needs was also emphasised.

The Israeli embassy said the allegations were "complete lies". "All detainees from the Hamas-Sumud provocation were given access to water, food and toilets; they were not denied access to legal counsel, and all their legal rights, including access to medical care, were fully upheld," embassy said. —*The Guardian*

Pak PM to visit Malaysia from 5 to 7 Oct

ISLAMABAD, 5 OCT

Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will visit Malaysia from 5 to 7 October following an invitation from Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, the Foreign Office announced. Accompanied by Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar and senior officials, Sharif's visit aims to strengthen bilateral ties. The Foreign Office stated, "The visit reflects the strong and enduring strategic partnership between Pakistan and Malaysia, rooted in mutual respect..." The leaders will discuss enhancing cooperation in trade, IT, investment, education, and other sectors. They are also expected to witness the signing of multiple agreements. The FO underlined Pakistan's ongoing commitment to nurturing its relationship with Malaysia for peace, stability, and sustainable development. *—PTI*

Shops shut down as protests rock PoK

MUZAFFARABAD, 5 OÇT

Shops and businesses in Pakistan-occupied Muzaffarabad have closed following violent protests that resulted in at least eight fatalities over four days. The unrest began on 29 September, with demonstrators expressing solidarity with the oppressed and voicing demands for change. Raja Shoaib, leader of the Jammu Kashmir Joint Awami Action Committee, stated, "We are not against anyone. These... are demands of oppressed people." Negotiations between the protestors and government representatives have failed, leading to escalating tensions and violent clashes. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Tariq Fazal Chaudhry emphasized the government's commitment to resolving issues peacefully and reiterated, "Violence is not the solution to any problem." *—ANI*

Indonesian school collapse death toll reaches 37

SIDOARJO, 5 OCT

Indonesian rescue teams are intensifying efforts to locate 26 missing students after the collapse of a prayer hall at the Al Khoziny Islamic boarding school, which has left 37 confirmed dead. On September 30, during an unpermitted construction, the structure failed under strain as hundreds of students gathered. Authorities reported that "the construction couldn't support the load...and the whole 800 square metres collapsed," according to construction expert Mudji Irmawan. Criticism over illegal building practices has surged, as many structures in non-urban areas lack permits. East Java Police Chief Nanang Avianto promised a thorough investigation into negligence, affirming, "We will investigate this case thoroughly." *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

Lebanese pop star turned militant Fadel surrenders

BEIRUT, 5 OCT

Lebanese pop star turned militant Fadel Shaker surrendered to military intelligence on Saturday, ending a 12-year fugitive status following 2013 clashes between his group and the Lebanese army. Shaker, sentenced to 22 years in absentia for supporting a terrorist group, was apprehended in Ein el-Hilweh refugee camp near Sidon. Officials noted that after coordination with mediators, "Shaker will be questioned in preparation to stand trial on new charges." During the violent sectarian conflict, which left 18 soldiers dead, Shaker had publicly denounced the military, saying, "We have two rotting corpses that we snatched from you..." His recent song release had gained significant attention across the Arab world. *—PTI*

Tel Aviv sees massive protest as thousands of Israelis called on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to sign Trump's Gaza deal and bring an end to the war, warning, 'It's now or never' ***PHOTO: SCREENGRAB***

Bibi rejects full Gaza withdrawal...

...Don claims Israel has accepted 'withdrawal'

TEL AVIV, 5 OCT

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he hopes to announce the release of all hostages from Gaza "in the coming days," as Israel and Hamas prepare for indirect talks in Egypt on Monday on a new US plan to end the war.

Netanyahu sent a delegation to Egypt to finalise "technical details" and stressed that Israel would not fully withdraw from Gaza. He insisted that Hamas would be disarmed, either diplomatically or militarily, in the plan's second phase.

The negotiations, based on a new US peace plan, aim to end the nearly two-year war that began with Hamas' 7 October 2023 attack. US President Donald Trump announced Israel has agreed to an initial withdrawal line and urged Hamas to confirm the plan, after which a ceasefire and hostage-prisoner exchange would commence. Trump warned Hamas to act swiftly, saying, "All bets will be off" otherwise, and also called on Israel to halt airstrikes. While some Gaza residents reported reduced bombing, Israeli strikes continued, with at least 22 Palestinians killed on Saturday, including 17 in Gaza City's Tuffah neighbourhood. *—PTI*

2 killed amid surge in Israeli, Arab violence

Two Arab-Israelis were killed in separate weekend shootings, raising 2025's death toll in Arab communities to 192. A man was shot dead in Deir al-Assad, while a suspected revenge attack in Rahat killed 21-year-old Adam al-Oubarah. The rise in violence is linked to organised crime and long-standing feuds.

Pro-Palestinian portesters gather in Rome, while in Barcelona, Spain, police clash with protesters during a rally held in solidarity with the Global Sumud Flotilla after its ships were intercepted by Israeli Navy ***PHOTO: PTT***

Gaza unites the world in protest

Marches in Rome, Barcelona denounce Israel

BARCELONA, 5 OCT

Massive protests erupted across southern Europe on Saturday, with hundreds of thousands marching in Rome, Barcelona, and Madrid to oppose Israel's ongoing military campaign in Gaza, now entering its third year.

In Rome, police estimated 2,50,000 demonstrators, while organisers claimed a million, following a general strike where over two million Italians supported Palestinians. The protests followed Israel's interception of the Global Sumud Flotilla, which departed Barcelona to breach the Gaza blockade.

Spain saw 1,00,000 protestors in Madrid and 70,000 in Barcelona, where demonstrators filled Passeig de Gracia holding signs like "Gaza Hurts Me" and "Stop the Genocide". Over 40 Spaniards, including a former Barcelona mayor, were among the 450 removed from the flotilla. Protests were also held in Valencia, Sevilla, Malaga, Paris, Lisbon, Athens, Skopje, London, and Manchester. In London, after 488 arrests at a vigil, the UK announced stricter protest laws. Over 2,000 people have been arrested since July under new terrorism laws. *—PTI*

Demonstrators in Barcelona, Spain, hold a banner that says 'Let's stop the genocide in Palestine, no more arms trade with Israel' ***PHOTO: PTI***

5 killed as Russia hits Ukraine overnight

KYIV, 5 OCT

At least five people were killed as Russia launched a large-scale overnight assault on Ukraine with drones, missiles, and guided aerial bombs, targeting civilian infrastructure, officials said Sunday.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Moscow fired over 50 ballistic missiles and around 500 drones across nine regions. In Lviv, four people, including a 15-year-old, were killed and at least six injured in combined drone and missile strikes, according to regional authorities.

Mayor Andriy Sadovyi said two districts lost power and public transport was halted temporarily. A fire broke out at a business complex on the city's outskirts, which he described as a civilian site unrelated to the war.

In the Ivano-Frankivsk region, one person was injured, Governor Svitlana Onyshchuk said. A woman was killed and nine others, including a 16-year-old girl, were wounded in Zaporizhzhia, where Governor Ivan Fedorov reported residential damage and power outages affecting about 73,000 households.

Six people, including a child, were injured in Sloviansk after a Russian bomb hit an apartment block, regional prosecutors said. Over two dozen residential buildings, cars, shops, and a café were damaged.

A train is seen damaged following Russia's drone attack in Shostka, Sumy region, Ukraine ***PHOTO: PTI***

Zelenskyy again urged Western allies to expedite air defense support. "Russia targeted our infrastructure, everything that ensures normal life," he said. "We need stronger protection to make this aerial terror pointless."

The Kremlin has intensified strikes on Ukraine's power grid and railways ahead of winter, as part of what Kyiv calls an effort to 'weaponize the cold.' *—PTI*

Trump deploys 300 troops to Chicago

CHICAGO / PORTLAND, 5 OCT

President Donald Trump has authorised the deployment of 300 National Guard troops to Chicago, citing spiralling crime. The move came just hours after federal agents shot an armed woman during a standoff with protesters opposing Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) operations.

According to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), at least 10 vehicles boxed in officers in Chicago. One driver, allegedly armed with a semi-automatic weapon, was shot after ramming a law enforcement vehicle. DHS said the woman, recently identified in an intelligence bulletin for doxing federal agents, drove herself to hospital. Her condition remains unknown.

Illinois Governor JB Pritzker condemned the deployment, calling it "an attempt to manufacture a crisis." Local authorities confirmed they responded only to maintain public safety and traffic control.

Meanwhile, a federal judge in Oregon has temporarily blocked Trump's deployment of National Guard troops to Portland. US District Judge Karin Immergut ruled that federalising the Guard without sufficient justification could violate the Constitution and federal law, stating that protests in Portland had been "small and uneventful."

The Defence Department had planned to federalise 200 Oregon Guard members for 60 days to protect federal property, following Trump's claims the city was "war-ravaged", a characterisation Oregon officials called absurd.

Trump has deployed or threatened to deploy troops to several Democrat-led cities including Los Angeles and Washington. In Portland, past deployments drew criticism for excessive force and lack of training, leading to a recent federal settlement with protesters injured during 2020's racial justice demonstrations. *—Agencies*

A judge has blocked deployment of troops to Portland ***PHOTO: PTI***

TRUMP MAY FEATURE ON $1 COIN FOR US 250TH ANNIVERSARY

The US Treasury is considering a $1 coin featuring President Donald Trump to mark the 250th anniversary of US independence in 2026, Politico reports. A draft shows Trump's profile and the phrase "FIGHT, FIGHT, FIGHT." Featuring living presidents on currency is rare and may face legal hurdles. Trump's approval is unclear. *—PTI*

Judge blocks Trump policy to detain migrant children

ATLANTA, 5 OCT

A federal judge has blocked a Trump policy ordering migrant child to be transferred to adult ICE detention upon turning 18. Judge Rudolph Contreras ruled it violates a 2021 court order requiring release to the least restrictive setting. Advocates said ICE planned transfers this weekend. The decision follows reports of coercive returns and increased scrutiny on unaccompanied minors. Detentions have surged, with average shelter stays rising from 37 to 171 days since January.

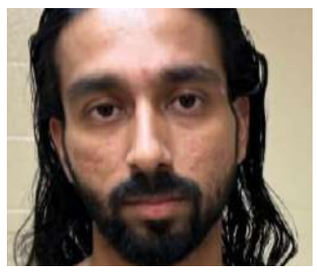
US extradites Indian man to Canada over assault case

ONTARIO, 5 OCT

An Indian-origin man wanted in connection with the assault of Iranian-origin woman Elnaz Hajtamiri in Canada in 2021 has been extradited from the United States, according to Canadian media reports.

Sukhpreet Singh, 25, was arrested in Texas in June by the US Marshals Service and charged in August. He was extradited to York Region, Ontario, on Tuesday and faces charges of aggravated assault and conspiracy to commit an indictable offence, York Regional Police said.

A Canada-wide warrant had been issued for Singh in 2023 after he was identified as a suspect in the violent attack on Hajtamiri in a Richmond Hill underground parking garage in 2021. The case has already led to multiple arrests. In 2022, four suspects, including Hajtamiri's ex-boyfriend Mohamad Lilo, were charged with assault, attempted murder, and attempted kidnapping. Three more were arrested the following year, bringing the total number of accused to eight with Singh's extradition. *—PTI*



NATURE'S WRATH

51 dead as monsoon mayhem wrecks Nepal

KATHMANDU, 5 OCT

At least 51 people have died and five are missing in eastern Nepal after landslides and floods triggered by heavy rainfall since Saturday night. Ilam district is worst hit, with 37 deaths reported across Deumai, Maijogmai, Ilam, and Sandakpur. One fatality each was reported in Panchthar, Khotang, and Udayapur. Four remain missing in Rasuwa and one is buried in Panchthar.

Relentless rain prompted vehicle restrictions in Kathmandu, red alerts along Bagmati and East Rapti rivers, and suspension of domestic flights at Tribhuvan International Airport. The monsoon is currently affecting five of Nepal's seven provinces.

Relentless rain prompted vehicle restrictions in Kathmandu ***PHOTO: ANI***

TYPHOON MATMO HITS SOUTHERN CHINA

Meanwhile, Typhoon Matmo, the 21st Pacific storm of 2025, is slamming southern China, heading towards Guangdong and Hainan. Authorities issued a red alert, closed schools and businesses, and cancelled over 200 flights. Trains and ferries were suspended in Hainan; tourist sites shut in Guangdong. Vietnam warned of flash floods and mudslides.

TROPICAL STORM FORMS OFF MEXICO

In the Pacific, Tropical Storm Priscilla has formed off Mexico, with winds of 75 km/h and a 220 km wind radius. Forecasts expect it to become a hurricane by Monday, moving parallel to the coast. *—Agencies*

Syria holds 1st parl polls since Assad's ouster

DAMASCUS, 5 OCT

Syria on Sunday held its first parliamentary elections since ruler Bashar al-Assad was overthrown, with voting taking place across most provinces. State media said the polls marked the formation of the first Syrian People's Assembly under the transitional government.

The SANA news agency reported that voting was conducted in designated electoral districts under the supervision of the 11-member Higher Committee for Parliamentary Elections, appointed by President Ahmed al-Sharaa in June.

Elections were postponed in parts of Raqqa and Hasakah provinces, as well as the Druze-majority Sweida region, due to security concerns following recent clashes.

After voting concludes, ballot boxes will be opened publicly in the presence of the media. Preliminary results will be announced through national outlets, followed by final results at a press conference next week.

The 210-member Assembly will comprise 140 members elected by 7,000 electoral college representatives across 60 districts, while 70 deputies will be appointed directly by al-Sharaa. Critics, including Al Jazeera, have described the process as undemocratic.

The elections come amid renewed tensions near Aleppo between transitional government forces and the US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces, who remain outside the national army and whose territories were excluded from the vote. *—ANI*

Elections were postponed in parts of Raqqa and Hasakah ***PHOTO: X***

‘Russia to stay India’s No. 1 crude oil supplier’

Despite US pressure, imports in Sept was around 4.7M bpd

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

India’s crude oil imports from Russia saw a marginal decline in September, but continued to account for over one-third of the country’s total oil purchases, despite US pressure to curb the trade over concerns that it supports Moscow’s war effort in Ukraine.

India’s crude imports in September were around 4.7 million barrels per day (bpd), up 2,20,000 bpd month-on-month and flat year-on-year.

Russian crude maintained its position as the largest single supplier, contributing about 1.6 million bpd - a 34 per cent share. However, this was roughly 1,60,000 bpd below the average Russian volumes imported during the first eight months of 2025, preliminary data by global trade analytics firm Kpler showed.

“Despite the dip, Russian barrels remain among the most economical feedstock options for Indian refiners, given their high GPW (gross product worth) margins and discounts relative to alternatives,” said Sumit Ritolia, Lead Research Analyst (Refining & Modelling) at Kpler.

Russian crude maintained its position as the largest single supplier, contributing about 1.6 million bpd, i.e, a 34 per cent share **PHOTO: AI**

Iraq was the second biggest crude oil supplier to India at around 8,81,115 bpd, followed by Saudi Arabia at 6,03,471 bpd and UAE at 5,94,152 bpd. The US was India’s fifth largest supplier at 2,06,667 bpd.

Russia became India’s top crude oil supplier, following the outbreak of the Ukraine war in 2022, overtaking traditional sources like Iraq and Saudi Arabia.

As some Western nations shunned Russian purchases, Moscow offered steep discounts, prompting Indian refiners to ramp up purchases and secure cheaper barrels to meet rising domestic demand. Russian oil share rose from less than 1 per cent prior to the Ukraine war to over 40 per cent.

More than three years after Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, neither the US nor any international body has sanctioned the purchase of Russian crude oil, which is refined into fuels like petrol and diesel.

In July, six months into his presidency, US President Donald Trump first threatened tariffs on Indian imports to pressure New Delhi to reduce its Russian oil purchases.

Russian oil will continue to stay the centrepiece of Indian diet as fuel demand rises in the festive season. *—PTI*

Zoho’s messaging app Arattai hits 7.5M downloads

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

Indian messaging platform Arattai, by Zoho, has surpassed 7.5 million downloads as of 3 October, marking a significant milestone in local app adoption. The app has gained traction due to endorsements from government officials and widespread sharing on social media. Zoho founder Sridhar Vembu praised his team for their consistent efforts, stating, “Allow neither praise nor criticism nor fame to distract you, resolutely stay the course.” Faisal Kawoosa of Techarc noted the importance of local software, stating, “Businesses, especially MSMEs, are extremely price sensitive.” Indian billionaire Anand Mahindra expressed his support on social media, sharing that he downloaded Arattai “with pride”. *—PTI*

Vedanta to invest ₹13K cr to expand aluminium output

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

Vedanta Ltd, led by Anil Agarwal, plans to invest Rs 13,226 crore to expand its aluminium capacity from 2.4 MTPA to 3.1 MTPA by FY28, sources said. Capacity will rise to 2.75 MTPA by FY26 before reaching 3.1 MTPA. BALCO, majority-owned by Vedanta, is set to join the one million tonne club. Aluminium, critical to electric mobility, renewable energy, urban infrastructure, and aerospace, will remain largest contributor to it’s target $8 billion to $10 billion group EBITDA by FY28. The company has cut production costs by 24 per cent. “Aluminium is increasingly the backbone of the energy transition. With scale and integration, Vedanta can meet India’s growing demand while staying internationally competitive,” an industry expert said. *—PTI*

Festive season boosts PVR INOX theatre attendance

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

Cinema exhibitor PVR INOX Ltd is gearing up for a strong festive season after a successful Dussehra weekend, with occupancy crossing 50 per cent and over 8.5 lakh admissions, coinciding with Gandhi Jayanti. The second quarter has already shown robust growth, and upcoming releases are expected to drive further excitement. Bollywood and Hollywood films, including Kantara: A Legend Chapter 1, Jolly LLB, and One Battle After Another, have drawn large audiences, while regional cinema titles such as Idli Kadai (Tamil/Telugu), Maria (Tamil), Vada Pav (Marathi), and Nikka Zaildar 4 (Punjabi) have also performed strongly, reflecting India’s cultural diversity. PVR INOX operates 1,757 screens across 353 properties in 111 cities in India and Sri Lanka. *—PTI*

BL Agro plans Rs 3K cr expansion in 5 years

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

Uttar Pradesh-based BL Agro plans to invest Rs 3,000 crore over five years to expand its edible oils and processed foods business, aiming to grow revenue 2.5 times to Rs 20,000 crore by 2030, CEO Navneet Ravikar told PTI. The Bareilly-based group, known for brands Bail Kolhu and Nourish, had a turnover of Rs 8,000 crore in 2024-25. Expansion plans include rice and milk processing, a 360-degree value chain linking manufacturing and by-products, CBG units, and entry into the premium segment through Leads Connect. BL Agro recently signed an MoU with the Ministry of Food Processing Industries to set up a large-scale integrated agro-processing facility at Bareilly, including automated rice milling and oil extraction. *—PTI*

FROM 6-9 OCT

Tata Capital, LG India to launch ₹27,000 cr IPOs

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

The primary market is set for a busy week as two major companies, Tata Capital Ltd and LG Electronics India Ltd, gear up to launch their initial public offerings (IPOs), collectively worth more than Rs 27,000 crore.

The twin issues are expected to draw strong investor interest, given their scale and the stature of their parent groups.

The IPOs come at a time when the Indian market is experiencing a boom in primary market activity, despite a struggling broader equity market.

In 2025, a total of 78 companies have already tapped the mainboard market through maiden public offerings, and several issues are lined up for this month.

The Rs 15,512 crore Tata Capital IPO, the largest issue of the year, will open for subscription on 6 October and close on 8 October.

At the upper end of the Rs 310 to Rs 326 per share price band, the non-banking financial company is valued at around Rs 1.38 lakh crore.

Following closely, LG Electronics India Ltd, the Indian arm of South Korea’s LG conglomerate, will open its Rs 11,607 crore IPO for subscription from 7 October to 9 October.

This will be the second South Korean firm to tap Indian markets after Hyundai Motors India’s listing last year.

Also, LG Electronics India’s issue will be the third-largest IPO of 2025, following Tata Capital’s upcoming Rs 15,512 crore issue and HDB Financial Services’ Rs 12,500 crore listing in June.

The price band has been set at Rs 1,080 to Rs 1,140 per share, valuing the company at about Rs 77,400 crore. *—PTI*

This marks the third consecutive month of withdrawals, following heavy outflows in August and July **PHOTO: FREEPIK**

FPIs withdraw equities worth ₹23,885 cr in Sept

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) remained net sellers of Indian equities in September, withdrawing Rs 23,885 crore (around $2.7 billion) and taking year-to-date outflow to Rs 1.58 lakh crore ($17.6 billion).

This marks the third consecutive month of withdrawals, following heavy outflows of Rs 34,990 crore in August and Rs 17,700 crore in July, data from depositories showed.

The latest selling was driven by multiple factors, like US trade and policy shocks -- steep tariff hikes of up to 50 per cent on Indian goods and a one-time USD 100,000 H1B visa fee, which hurt sentiment toward export-oriented sectors, especially IT, Himanshu Srivastava, Principal, Manager Research, Morningstar Investment Research India, said.

The rupee’s fall to a record low level also added currency risk, while relatively high valuations of Indian equities prompted rotation to other Asian markets, he added.

Despite the ongoing sell-off, some analysts believe conditions may gradually turn in India’s favour.

Vaqarjaved Khan, Senior Fundamental Analyst at Angel One, noted that valuations have now become more reasonable and that factors, such as a cut in GST rates and a pro-growth monetary policy, could help rekindle foreign interest.

Meanwhile, debt markets witnessed net inflow, FPIs invested about Rs 1,085 crore under the general limit and Rs 1,213 crore through the voluntary retention route in September. *—PTI*

Volatile week ahead for gold, silver

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

Gold prices are likely to remain volatile in the coming week, as investors track developments around the US government funding bill, labour market data and Federal Reserve commentary, analysts said.

The release of the Federal Open Market Committee meeting minutes on Thursday is also likely to influence bullion market sentiment, they added.

Mer said gold prices added another 3.5-4 per cent to its recent gains last week, buoyed by a weaker US dollar and rising concerns over the partial US government shutdown, which has delayed crucial macroeconomic data releases.

On the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX), gold futures for December delivery surged Rs 3,222, or 2.8 per cent, in the past week. On Friday, gold closed at Rs 1,18,113 per 10g, near its lifetime peak of Rs 1,18,444 per 10g recorded earlier in the week. Reflecting robust domestic demand, India’s gold and silver imports nearly doubled in September compared to August, ahead of the festive and wedding season, analysts said.

Globally, gold futures for December delivery rose 1.05 per cent to settle at $3,908.90 per ounce on Friday, touching a record of $3,923.30 per ounce on Thursday. *—PTI*

Exports making Indian factories greener by up to 25%: IIM study

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

A study by the Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Lucknow, has found that export-oriented Indian manufacturing firms not only experience growth but also become greener.

The research, led by Professor Chandan Sharma, analysed two decades of firm-level data and has been published in the prestigious journal Energy Economics (Elsevier).

Contrary to common concerns that globalisation increases environmental pressures in developing countries, the study shows that international trade can promote sustainable manufacturing. Using the Propensity Score Matching–Difference-in-Differences (PSM-DID) methodology, the researchers found that firms entering export markets become significantly more energy efficient, largely by adopting advanced foreign technologies.

Within three years of exporting, firms can improve energy efficiency by 25 per cent compared with non-exporting peers.

The research analysed 2 decades of firm-level data & has been published in the prestigious journal Energy Economics **PHOTO: MANYATA.CO.IN**

The study also found that even non-exporting firms benefit indirectly through exposure to export-intensive industries. Improvements in energy efficiency tend to persist over time, highlighting trade as a channel for technology diffusion.

Professor Sharma emphasised the policy relevance of these findings, suggesting that promoting foreign technology access, incentivising energy-efficient upgrades, and reinforcing environmental standards among exporters can align trade with environmental objectives.

Overall, the study challenges the perception that globalisation harms the environment in developing economies, demonstrating that exports can simultaneously drive economic growth, technology adoption, and greener production, supporting India’s climate goals under the Paris Agreement. *—PTI*

India, EU to resume trade talks from 6 Oct

NEW DELHI, 5 OÇT

Senior officials from India and the 27-nation European Union (EU) are set to commence the next round of negotiations for a proposed free trade agreement (FTA) on Monday in Brussels. This will be the 14th round of talks, running from 6 October to 10 October, aimed at resolving differences for an early conclusion to discussions.

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal expressed optimism, stating, “I hope that the two sides will sign the agreement soon.” The trade pact seeks to enhance two-way commerce and investments, with negotiations expected to conclude by December.

Goyal is anticipated to meet EU Trade Commissioner Maros Sefcovic in South Africa later this month to assess progress following last month’s review in India with Sefcovic and EU Agriculture Commissioner Christophe Hansen.

Negotiations resumed in June 2022 after an eight-year hiatus, previously stalled in 2013 due to market access disagreements.

The key EU demands include significant duty reductions on automobiles and medical devices, as well as lower taxes on wine and spirits.

The bilateral trade in goods between India and the EU reached USD 136.53 billion in 2024-25, with services estimated at USD 51.45 billion in 2023. *—PTI*

India to hold trade talks with Chile, Peru soon

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

India will hold trade negotiations with Chile and Peru later this year. Talks with Chile will run from 27 October in Santiago, while discussions with Peru will take place from 3 November in Lima. India will conduct its second round with Chile and eighth with Peru. Negotiations with Chile aims to expand the 2006 preferential trade agreement into a comprehensive economic partnership agreement (CEPA), covering digital services, investment, MSMEs, & critical minerals. *—PTI*

TCS results, macro data to guide market sentiment: Analyst

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

Equity market sentiment this week is expected to be shaped by macroeconomic data, global trends, and quarterly earnings from IT major TCS, analysts said. Investors will also track foreign portfolio investors (FPIs), who remained net sellers of Indian equities in September, withdrawing Rs 23,885 crore (USD 2.7 billion), taking year-to-date outflows to Rs 1.58 lakh crore (USD 17.6 billion).

The Q2 FY26 earnings season begins with TCS set to report on 9 October. Macroeconomic releases, including HSBC services and composite PMIs, as well as banking sector data on loan and deposit growth, will be closely monitored. Primary market activity is expected to remain robust, with large IPOs from Tata Capital and LG Electronics lined up.

Globally, US macroeconomic updates, such as FOMC minutes, jobless claims, and consumer sentiment, will be in focus amid delays caused by the ongoing government shutdown. Investors will also watch the rupee, which has recently fallen to a record low against the US dollar.

The IT sector will remain under the spotlight, with markets looking for commentary on layoffs, the H-1B visa fee hike, proposed outsourcing tax, hiring outlook, deal wins, discretionary tech spending, and AI initiatives. *—PTI*

Mcap of 7 top firms’ surge by Rs 74,573 crore

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

The combined market valuation of seven of India’s top ten most valuable firms surged by Rs 74,573.63 crore over the past week, buoyed by a positive trend in equities, with HDFC Bank emerging as the standout winner.

HDFC Bank contributed Rs 30,106.28 crore to its market valuation, bringing it to Rs 14,81,889.57 crore. LIC’s market cap increased by Rs 20,587.87 crore to Rs 5,72,507.17 crore, while State Bank of India saw a surge of Rs 9,276.77 crore to Rs 8,00,340.70 crore.

Other gainers included Hindustan Unilever, ICICI Bank, Bajaj Finance, and Tata Consultancy Services (TCS). Conversely, Reliance Industries lost Rs 19,351.44 crore, reducing its valuation to Rs 18,45,084.98 crore.

Bharti Airtel and Infosys also experienced declines. Reliance remains the most valued firm in India, followed closely by HDFC Bank. *—PTI*

REUNIONS & GETAWAYS

India sees record surge in Diwali travel bookings: Expert

MUMBAI, 5 OCT

India is witnessing a record surge in festive travel this Diwali, as travellers combine traditional celebrations and family reunions with luxury escapes and spiritual journeys, with online travel platforms reporting strong growth in domestic and international bookings, according to experts.

MakeMyTrip co-founder and Group CEO Rajesh Magow said visiting friends and relatives (VFR) remains the biggest driver of festive season travel, as many Indians head back to their hometowns to celebrate Diwali.

“Therefore, of the top 10 most booked destinations, five are metros: Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Chennai. This year, with the festival falling early in the week, many travellers are booking their trips as early as the preceding Friday to enjoy extended festivities. In terms of international travel, short-haul destinations, such as the UAE, Singapore, Thailand and an emerging favourite, Vietnam, have become the go-to choices this festive season for Indians, Magow added.

PHOTO: AI

Thomas Cook (India) President and Country Head, Holidays, MICE, Visa - Rajeev Kale told PTI that there’s a growing trend where families, including multiple generations, are choosing to celebrate festivals like Diwali - for bonding time and celebrations, while exploring favourite or new destinations.

Top international favourites include Europe’s Switzerland, France, Italy, Austria, Spain and Portugal.

Short-haul favourites include Vietnam, Oman, Maldives and Bali, with Cambodia emerging strongly, Kale said, adding that visa-free and easy visa destinations like Thailand, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, Dubai-Abu Dhabi, Indonesia and the Philippines continue to drive demand.

On the domestic front, he said, travellers are choosing Kerala, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Andamans, and spiritual circuits like Char Dham, Kailash Mansarovar, Ayodhya, and Varanasi. *—PTI*

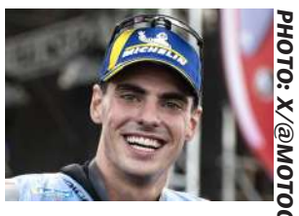


PHOTO: X/@MOTOGP

MotoGP: Aldeguer wins Indonesia Grand Prix

JAKARTA, 5 OCT

Rookie Fermin Aldeguer earned the first victory of his fledgling MotoGP career at the Indonesia Grand Prix on Sunday, while newly crowned champion Marc Marquez crashed out after a crunching collision with Marco Bezzecchi. Gresini Racing rider Aldeguer surged past KTM's Pedro Acosta to take the lead on the 10th lap, eventually finishing well clear of the competition. The win will have helped Aldeguer erase the pain of his second-placed finish in Saturday's sprint, where he led for most of the 13-lap race before finishing second behind Bezzecchi. Acosta finished second, with Aldeguer's teammate Alex Marquez completing the podium. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Gaganjeet Bhullar's hopes of a sixth win

JAKARTA, 5 OCT

Gaganjeet Bhullar's hopes of a sixth win in Indonesia were dashed on the final day as Australian Wade Ormsby defeated Scott Vincent from Zimbabwe on the first hole of a sudden-death play-off to claim the Jakarta International Championship here Sunday.The 45-year-old Ormsby had gone into the final round tied on -11 with Vincent, the International Series Morocco victor, and 2023 BNI Indonesian Masters champion Bhullar.Although Bhullar and Vincent both picked up a birdie on the first, the Indian dropped three shots on the front nine to fall away. Two early birdies after the turn gave the Indian hope, but two costly doubles on 15 and 18 dashed any hope he had. *—PTI*

India goes down 11-19 against Thailand in Water Polo

KANPUR, 5 OCT

The second day of the Water Polo and Artistic Swimming events at the 11th Asian Aquatics Championships 2025 saw India's Water Polo team lose 11-19 to Thailand at the Veer Savarkar Sports Complex in Ahmedabad. Meanwhile, in Artistic Swimming, Uzbekistan's Khadicha Agzamova and Sabina Makhmudova secured the top spot in the Duet Technical, and Thailand's Kantinan Adisaisiributr and Pongpimporn Pongsuwan triumphed in the Mixed Duet Technical. In the Men's Group B clash, Thailand recorded a commanding 19-11 win over India. Thailand took control in the second and maintained its lead till the end.*—PTI*

India U-17 team to play two friendlies in China

NEW DELHI, 5 OCT

The Indian U-17 men's team will travel to Beijing to play two closed-door friendly matches against China U-17 on October 8 and 10, the All India Football Federation (AIFF) said on Sunday. After being crowned SAFF U-17 champions just over a week ago, Bibiano Fernandes' boys continued their training camp in Goa and will arrive in China on the evening of Monday, 6 October. Both matches against the hosts will be played at the National Football Training Centre in Xianghe, around 80 kilometres from China's capital, Beijing. The friendlies form part of India's preparations for the AFC U17 Asian Cup 2026 Qualifiers, scheduled in November in Ahmedabad *—PTI*

India, Pak captains refuse handshake at Women's WC

BCCI had conveyed to players to avoid customary handshake

COLOMBO, 5 OCT

On expected lines, India captain Harmanpreet Kaur did not shake hands with her Pakistan counterpart Fatima Sana during the toss for the Women's World Cup fixture, maintaining the trend set by the men's team in the Asia Cup.

The BCCI had conveyed to the players to avoid customary handshake with members of the Pakistani team.Mel Jones conducted the toss, and both the captains maintained their distance during the ceremony. Pakistan won the toss and elected to field.India, who enjoy an 11-0 record over Pakistan in the ODI format, made a forced change to their playing eleven with Renuka Singh replacing an injured Amanjot Kaur.

Pakistan replaced Omaima Sohali with Sadaf Shamas.In the recently concluded men's Asia Cup, all three games between India and Pakistan took place in a hostile environment. Indian players did not shake hands before or after the game with the opposition. Champions India also refused to take the Asia Cup trophy from ACC president Mohsin Naqvi, who happens to be Pakistan Cricket Board chief and an interior minister in the government with a pronounced anti-India political position. India and Pakistan's league stage clash in the Women's ODI World Cup 2025 on Sunday was interrupted due to a proliferation of insects in the field of play.

India captain Harmanpreet Kaur and her Pakistani counterpart Fatima Sana walk past after the toss ahead of the Women's ODI World Cup 2025 match
PHOTO: PTI

Both sets of players were seen struggling due to the effect of insects throughout India's innings, and the players were called off the field before the start of the 35th over to allow for a round of fumigation. *—PTI*

WOMEN'S WORLD CUP

NZ, South Africa look to return to winning ways

INDORE, 5 OCT

New Zealand vs South Africa
Match starts at
3.00 pm IST

An improved bowling performance will be topmost on New Zealand's agenda while South Africa will aim to work on batting form when the two teams square off in a Women's World Cup match here on Monday, trying to shrug off the disappointment of crushing defeats in their respective opening games.

While defending champions Australia brushed aside New Zealand by 89 runs in a Trans-Tasman rivalry, the Proteas women were crushed fair and square by England, who won by 10 wickets. In both cases, the batting performance by the losing side was underwhelming to say the least, but New Zealand were also guilty of letting it slip after having Australia reduced to 128 for 5 inside the 22nd over and letting them get to 326.

Ashleigh Gardner, Southern Stars' most valued all-round asset, turned the tables on the White Ferns with a brilliant counter-attacking hundred, but New Zealand skipper Sophie Devine's run-a-ball 112 wasn't complemented by her teammates as they lost their last five wickets for only 19 runs.

For South Africa to become competitive, Laura Wolvaardt, Tazmin Brits, Sune Luus, and Marizanne Kapp need to contribute more with the bat.

On paper, though, New Zealand are favourites considering that they have better quality in both departments, especially slow bowling, where Amelia Kerr's 10 overs will prove to be decisive. *—PTI*

IRF: Sato, Hyman scorch the track on a hot day

COIMBATORE, 5 OCT

Japan's Itsuki Sato of Ahmedabad Apex Racers finished on top yet again in the FIA-certified Formula 4 Indian championship, the third round of the Indian Racing Festival (IRF), at the Kari Motor Speedway in Coimbatore on Sunday.In Saturday's opener, Sato raced to a comfortable win, but this time around, he fought with his hands. Shane Chandaria (Chennai Turbo Riders), who won the day's opening race, and Frenchman Sachel Rotge (Kichcha's Kings Bengaluru) were locked in a keen tussle right in front for most part.Sato tried hard to catch them up but lacked the pace. However, with a lap to go, he got the lucky break. Leaders Shane and Sachel, in a bid to outwit the other, got into contact in turn 10 and missed out on a place on the podium. Sato grabbed the chance that came his way to take the checkered flag and, with it, completed a grand double."I did not expect to win as I lacked the pace. The other day, I felt good with the car, but this time I couldn't do much but still got to climb on top of the podium," said an elated Sato after the race. Ishaan Madesh (Kolkata Royal Tigers) took the top honour in the final race for the F4 India cars.In the Indian Racing League (Driver B) race, Britain's Raoul Hyman of Goa Aces JA Racing kept his cool right through to clinch the much-needed win for the team. *—PTI*

Valishetty secures maiden BWF Super 100 title

AL AIN, 5 OCT

Young Indian shuttler Shriyanshi Valishetty clinched her maiden BWF Super 100 title in the women's singles category at the USD 120,000 Al Ain Masters, defeating compatriot Tasnim Mir in a pulsating three-game final here on Sunday.

Shriyanshi Valishetty
PHOTO: PTI

The 18-year-old from Telangana, who trains at the Pullela Gopichand Academy, showed remarkable composure to fight back from a game down and prevail 15-21, 22-20, 21-7 in a 49-minute summit clash.Valishetty squandered a four-point lead in the opening game as Tasnim rallied from 4-8 to 14-9, eventually pocketing the first game.

The second game turned into a neck-and-neck battle. Valishetty erased an early 1-4 deficit to go up 8-5 and later 17-14. Tasnim fought hard to stay in contention, but Valishetty held her nerve to take the contest into a decider.

Bolstered by a formidable line-up featuring current and former junior world No.1s, second seeds India will begin their campaign against Nepal in the mixed team event of the BWF World Junior Badminton Championships, beginning at the National Centre of Excellence here on Monday. *—PTI*

3RD IRANI CUP

Dubey, Thakur shine as Vidarbha beat Rest of India by 93 runs

VIDARBHA, 5 OCT

Yash Dhull found allies in all-rounders Saransh Jain and Manav Suthar. But the Delhi youngster's counterattack only delayed the inevitable as a well-oiled Vidarbha unit maintained its supremacy in the tie by winning its third Irani Cup title.

With all five bowlers chipping in with crucial breakthroughs Yash Thakur's wickets off successive balls, including the prized scalp of Dhull 92 that sparked an exchange of words between the duo, being the highlight Vidarbha bowled Rest of India out for 267, three minutes before the tea break on Sunday, the fifth and final day of the annual fixture between the defending Ranji Trophy champion and Rest of India. Credit would go to Dubey and Thakur, both of whom had a match haul of six wickets and did well enough to get the majority of the 20 Rest of India wickets across two innings. Rest had slumped to 133 for six during the first session on the final morning, but it was Dhull and Manav Suthar (56), who got Rest of India back in the game with a 104-run stand for the seventh wicket. It was Taide who was again back in action, running backwards from the slip cordon to catch a top-edge off last-man Gurnoor Brar and spark celebrations in the Vidarbha camp. Vidarbha 342 (Taide 143, Rathod 91, Akash Deep 3-51) and 232 (Mokhade 37, Kamboj 4-34) beat Rest of India 214 (Patidar 66, Abhimanyu 52, Thakur 4-66) and 267 (Dhull 92, Suthar 56*, Dubey 4-73) by 93 runs. *—PTI*

Vidarbha won Irani Trophy 2025
PHOTO: X/@CRICKETRACKER

CRYSTAL PALACE'S LONG UNBEATEN RUN ENDS

SHANGHAI, 5 OCT

Crystal Palace saw its 19-match unbeaten run in all competitions come to an end by conceding late in a 2-1 defeat at Everton in the Premier League on Sunday, while Ange Postecoglou remained without a win in charge of Nottingham Forest after its 2-0 loss at Newcastle.

Manchester City can move to within three points of the lead now held by Arsenal by winning at Brentford later Sunday.

Palace last tasted defeat on April 16 a stretch lasting nearly six months and including winning the FA Cup for a first-ever trophy but was sunk by a goal in the third minute of stoppage time by Jack Grealish, who got in the way of a clearance by Daniel Munoz and saw the ball rebound straight into the net.

It completed a comeback by Everton, which equalized through Iliman Ndiaye's 76th-minute penalty after Munoz put the visitors in front in the 37th.

Bruno Guimaraes and Nick Woltemade scored second-half goals for Newcastle against Forest, which has been under Postecoglou for seven games in all competitions losing five and drawing two.

Aston Villa beat Burnley 2-1 thanks to two goals by Donyell Malen, and Wolverhampton had manager Vitor Pereira sent off early in the 1-1 draw with Brighton for what the Premier League described as "irresponsible" behavior in the technical area. *—PTI*

Crystal Palace's Daniel Munoz, left, and Everton's Jack Grealish battle for the ball during the English Premier League soccer match at the Hill Dickinson Stadium
PHOTO: X/@CRYSTALPALACE

Anisimova wins China Open, beats Noskova

SHANGHAI, 5 OCT

World number four Anisimova picked precise angles to bounce the ball near the sidelines and frustrate Noskova, blanking the 20-year-old in just 23 minutes.

Czech Noskova, unfazed by the bagel in her first WTA 1000 final, got a break in the first game of the second set, before saving two break points with an ace and powerful backhands to take a decisive 4-2 lead against the American.

However, Anisimova, runner-up at Wimbledon and the U.S. Open this year, prevailed with superior speed in the third set, winning four straight games against an exhausted Noskova to secure her fourth career WTA title.

Mpetshi upsets Fritz

Big-serving Frenchman Giovanni Mpetshi Perricard upset fourth-ranked Taylor Fritz 6-4, 7-5 and advanced to the fourth round of the Shanghai Masters on Sunday.

Mpetshi Perricard sent down 12 aces, to Fritz's nine, and took a break in each set as he clinched his first tour victory against the American in one hour and 25 minutes to set up a last-16 meeting with 10th-seeded Holger Rune. *—PTI*

USA routs India 5-0 in Checkmate event

ARLINGTON, 5 OCT

Hikaru Nakamura stunned world champion D Gukesh as India were whitewashed 0-5 by the USA in the first Checkmate, an evening of chess presented as a live arena spectacle in Arlington, USA.

While the match had many tense moments and players from both teams created winning chances, the USA rose to the occasion and scored several clutch wins.

Playing with black pieces, the Indians suffered a rough loss and would look to bounce back with white pieces in the return match in the second leg in India.

While Grandmaster Arjun Erigaisi lost to Fabiano Caruana, Grandmaster Divya Deshmukh suffered a shock defeat at the hands of International Master Carissa Yip.

International master Levy Rozman then defeated Sagar Shah before chess prodigy Ethan Vaz lost to International master Tani Adewumi. *—PTI*

MAJOR LEAGUE SOCCER

Messi help Miami beat Revolution 4-1

FORT LAUDERDALE, 5 OCT

Tadeo Allende and Jordi Alba each scored two goals, Lionel Messi had three assists, and Inter Miami beat the New England Revolution 4-1 on Saturday night.

Messi has 24 goals and 17 assists, and his 41 goal contributions this season are the second most in MLS history. Carlos Vela had 49 (34 goals, 15 assists) for Los Angeles FC in 2019.

Miami (17-7-8) is third in the Eastern Conference with 59 points, three behind second-place Cincinnati and three ahead of Charlotte and New York City. Philadelphia, the points leader in all of MLS, has 66 points.

Messi bags a hat-trick
PHOTO: X/@INTERMIAMICF

Allende ran onto a no-look pass played ahead by Messi and scored from the right corner of the 6-yard box with a low shot that slipped inside the back post to open the scoring in the 32nd minute.

Alba gave Miami a 2-0 lead in first-half stoppage time. Messi stole a misplayed first-touch pass by the goalkeeper at the corner of the area, quickly cut to evade a defender near the penalty spot, and then slipped a pass to Alba for the finish from point-blank range.

Dor Turgeman made his first career start in MLS and scored for New England in the 59th minute, but moments later, Allende held off a defender and put away a long arcing ball ahead played by Messi to make it 3-1 in the 60th, and Alba's second goal capped the scoring in the 63rd. *—PTI*